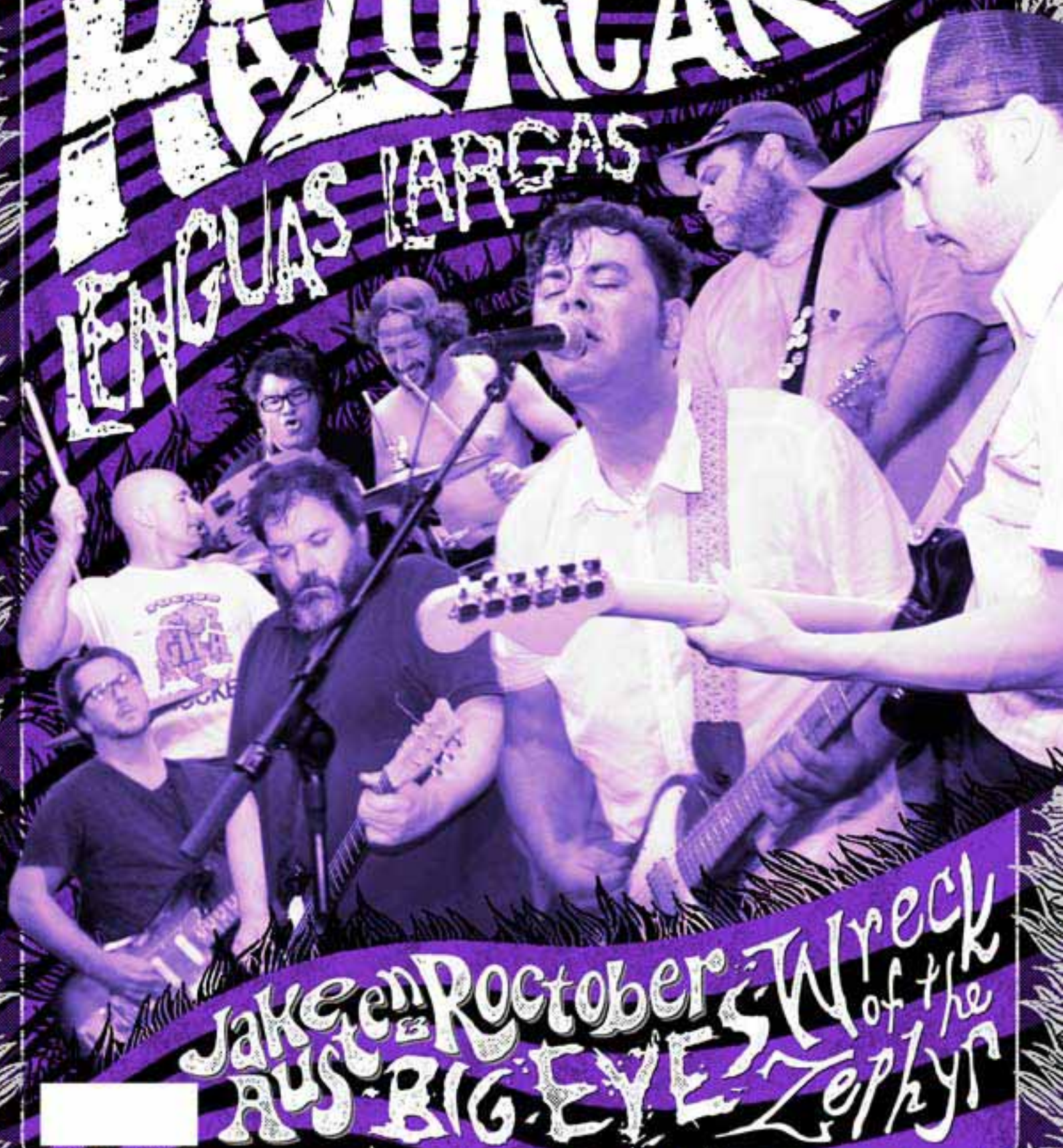


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# RAZORCAKE

## LENGUAS LARGAS



Jake en Roctober Wreck of the  
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—Daryl Gussin

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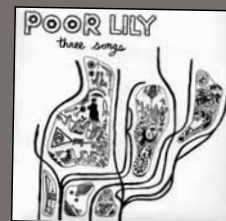
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## The Cocklebur of Quality

Razorcake lives and thrives off submissions. That's what makes Razorcake fundamentally different from the corporate-facing enterprises hiding under the thin skin of "independent press." We often confound our advertisers. We're not pay-to-play. We can't promise positive coverage; all we can do is promise to do our best to publish a review in a timely fashion. We take pride in content based on enthusiasm, not publicist pressure, advertising collusion, or corporate "synergy." (There's a world of difference between mutual, long-term respect and "strategic partnerships.") As one of the main editors for Razorcake, I stopped assigning coverage years and years ago. It wasn't dramatic. "Hey Donofthedeath, you like that band?" "Yeah, I guess." "Want to cover them?" "Sure." Skip ahead a couple weeks. "How'd it go, Don?" "It was fine." The interview was fine. The pictures were great. It took a lot of coordinated volunteer work.

We don't put all this effort into Razorcake for "fine." We want stories that stick. We want unmitigated excitement, life stories, and great articles. We want stories about getting shot in the elbow, then beating the guy with his own gun at a house show that Scared Of Chaka is playing. (See the Lenguas Largas interview.) We want coverage of the disenfranchised, the overlooked, the marginalized, and the lifers who give advice on how to make movie-real, bloody intestines and give firsthand accounts of the living history of zines (see the Wreck Of The Zephyr and Jake Austen interviews). We want coverage of great new bands by other musicians who are stoked on 'em. (See Big Eyes, interviewed by Félix of Big Crux and Taiga of Criminal Code.)

I thought that was obvious. If you feel strongly that Razorcake's not covering something awesome or insightful or powerful, don't get out your big foam finger and point at us to do it. Do it yourself. If you want us to run it, show us that you understand Razorcake's basic culture,

general focus, and quality controls. Our focus is intentionally fuzzy at the edges. We have no interest in leading anyone around by the nose.

Yeah, I know complaining is a competitive sport for punks; I'm just over listening to it. It's been on the same tape loop for the past twenty years. Go fill up someone else's letters section, message board, or whatever emerging complaint technology that's at your fingertips. Anonymous, no-accountability rage—why invite it into the middle of our house to shit on our floor?

Here's where the strings come in. Razorcake's not in the phone book publishing business. The goal is not to merely fill 112 pages every two months with anything that comes our way.

Razorcake has some rules. First, we cover a band/artist/person only once in print. (There was one exception. It happened on a technicality that has since been removed.) Second, no corporate taint. Subsidiaries and vanity labels of "major indies" are still majors. Car companies, beverage companies, and apparel companies? Why bother when on the other side of the fence are leagues and leagues of great, overlooked, legitimately independent artists? Third, do I still have to say this? Nothing racist, homophobic, or sexist. Fourth, we only run exclusive content. We're not the *Utne Reader* of punk. Fifth, be prepared to be heavily edited. Quality's a cocklebur. Good and righteous ideas themselves don't automatically make a piece well-written and thought out. Be prepared to follow our guidelines, follow our advice, our protocols. We don't give a fuck how popular a band is or how great you think they are. If the piece is boring or poorly written, reads like an advertisement or an academic dissertation, it's not going to run under our umbrella.

Thanks for reading. Kill from the heart.

—Todd Taylor

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"Whoever tries to  
imagine perfection  
simply reveals their  
own emptiness."

—George Orwell

This issue is dedicated to the marriage of Daryl Gussin and Adrian Chi.



You like  
good  
music?

Otis Redding  
memorial statue  
in Macon, GA

His music is  
constantly playing.

photo by Joe Evans III

**THANK YOU:** Break out some catnip and try getting out of an empty bathtub when it really kicks in thanks to Jason Willis for this issue's cover. We're not worthy; Wobble Peanuts thanks to Brad Beshaw for his illo. in Sean's column; Boca do Inferno with a side of sardines thanks to Jackie Rustad for her illo. in Jim's column; Magnetic tapes, silhouettes of good memories thanks to Steve Larder for his illo. in Amy's column; Even though it's greyscale, it looks fluorescent thanks to Marcos for his illo. in Dale's column; Blood pressure popping and soda pop thanks to Alex Barrett for his illo. in Nørð's column; I-beam, one sock, anxious dog thanks to Jason Armadillo for his illo. in Gary's column; Lifetime subscription to anyone who gets this as a chest piece thanks to Craig Horky for his Rhythm Chicken illo.; My elbow's itchy. Let me scratch it with your face thanks to Bill Pinkel for his illo. in Nardwuar's interview; Page 41. Lady to the left of the bass player. You're tired. It's okay to go home, thanks to Taiga Dinger, Félix Reyes, Patrick Houdek, Shanty Cheryl, and Lauren Measure for the Big Eyes interview; It's a dog-eat-humans type of world thanks to Samantha Beerhouse, Josh Rosa, Matthew Hart, Marcos Siref, Jessica Gosselin, Beth Dazet, Allison McEldoon, and Michael Douchette for their help with the Wreck Of The Zephyr interview; Ninety pounds of fluid and a room full of shakin' asses thanks to Donna Ramone, Shanty Cheryl, and El Diablo for their help with the Lenguas Largas interview; It's predicated on the fact that no one wants to go into debt to deeply cover music thanks to Ryan Leach and Lauren Measure for their help with the Jake Austen of Roctober interview; I just watched the best documentary. It was interpretive dance that fully explained architecture. Fascinating. Thanks to the following who reviewed music, zines, books, and videos: Megan Pants, Craven Rock, Donna Ramone, Mike Faloon, Keith Rosson, Ryan Leach, The Lord Kveldulfr, Chris Terry, Sal Lucci, Ryan Horky, Jeff Proctor, Joe Evans III, Kurt Morris, Matt Average, Tim Brooks, Sean Koepenick, Rene Navarro, Paul J. Comeau, Chris Mason, Mark Twistworthy, Juan Espinosa, Jimmy Alvarado, Donofthedeath, Billups Allen, Aphid Peewit, Designated Dale, Garrett Barnwell, Nørð, Art Ettinger, MP Johnson, Mike Frame, Nighthawk, Kristen K., Gary Hornberger, Katie Dunne, Steve Hart, Lauren Trout, James Meier, and Aphid Peewit; The following people helped us out in the past two months. We never take it for granted thanks to Candice Tobin, Kari Hamanaka, Robert El Diablo, Malcolm McLaren, Chris Baxter, Mary-Clare Stevens, John Barlog, Alex Martinez, Marcos Siref, PJ Fancher, Ever Velasquez, Joe Dana, Juan Espinosa, Aaron Kovacs, Cesar Macias, Julia Smut, Jenn Witte, George Lopez, Donna Ramone, Tim Burkett, Jeff Proctor, Nighthawk, Josh Rosa, Toby Tober, Marty Ploy, Sal Lucci, Jennifer Federico, Johnny Volume, Katie Hornberger, Adrian Chi, Adam Bowers, Stacy Medina, Ronnie Sullivan, Garrett Barnwell, Adrian Salas, Kristen K., Derek Whipple, Katie Dunne, Sean Arenas, Danny Segura, Matthew Hart, and Andrew Wagher.



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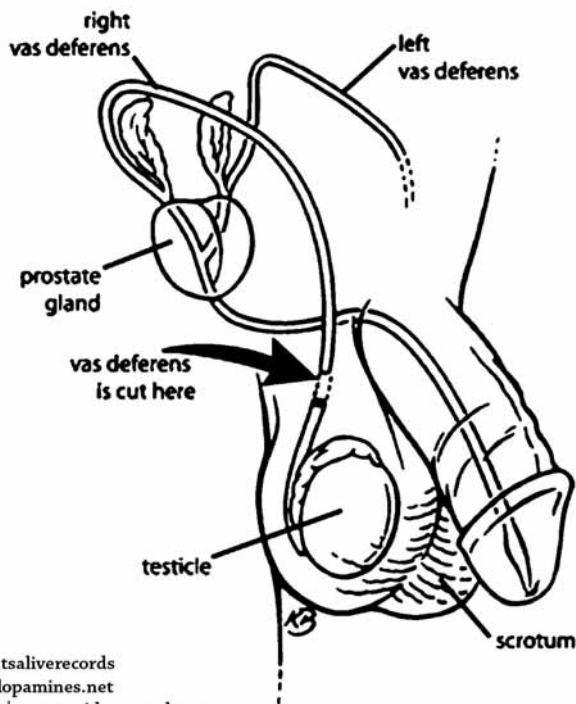
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# RAZORCAKE

Issue #70 October / November 2012

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"I've only figured one thing. That's this: if a person would just make the effort, there's something to be learned from everything. From even the most ordinary, commonplace things, there's always something you can learn. I read somewhere that they say there's different philosophies in razors. Fact is, if it weren't for that, nobody'd survive." -Haruki Murakami, *Pinball, 1973*.



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Individual opinions expressed within are not necessarily those of Razorcake/Gorsky Press, Inc.



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## A MONKEY TO RIDE THE DOG

SEAN CARSWELL

**“If Occupy has to get a permit, so does the Tea Party.”**

# Foot-Loose Rebels

The supervisors of San Luis Obispo County tried to attack free speech this week. I happened to be in town to witness it.

The crux of the problem, according to county supervisors, was the Occupy movement. The county's chief administrative officer, Jim Grant, claimed that the Occupy encampment presented a hazard to public health and safety, though he didn't clarify exactly how. He suggested an ordinance that required any group assembling on public or vacant lands to obtain a permit from the county before doing so.

As he should have expected, a shit storm followed.

I wasn't involved in the shit storm. I just happened to be doing some work in San Luis Obispo County that day. I was in and out of my truck a lot, and my radio was tuned to the public station. I listened to a county supervisors meeting addressing the issue. This may sound like a dorky thing to do—listen to a county supervisors' meeting on public radio—and maybe it is, but the meeting was exciting on this day. A couple dozen people came to the meeting to scold the supervisors and Jim Grant in particular. Each person had an opportunity to speak for a few minutes. The beauty of this came in numbers. As a citizen, we can all speak at public meetings like this. We're all allowed somewhere between three and five minutes. When twenty-four people come to the meeting and use all five of their minutes, supervisors have to hear about this shit for over two hours. Suddenly, you have an effective protest on your hands.

The protestors struck me as interesting. Sure, there were a couple from the Occupy movement who spoke. They were the ones being targeted. They needed to be there. But members of the Tea Party also spoke against the ordinance. They realized, of course, that if Occupy has to get a permit, so does the Tea Party. One former Republican congresswoman from the area approached the podium to say that, sure, she knew what it was like to be protested. She wished everyone agreed with her all the time, but democracies are built on dissent. One incredibly nervous guy from a former Soviet bloc country stood up to say that, prior to immigrating to the U.S., he'd been imprisoned for ten years

for speaking out against the government. “Free speech is the most beautiful thing in America,” he told the supervisors. His anxiety seemed to be stealing his breath, but he found enough air to add, “Don't touch it, for God's sake.”

Finally, after two dozen people from across the political spectrum castigated the supervisors, they voted to toss out the ordinance. Jim Grant apologized.

The whole debacle gave me the urge to write a column about one of the greatest moments in American history: the Wobbly free speech protests in Missoula, Montana.

In 1909, a team of organizers from the Industrial Workers of the World (the Wobblies) traveled to Missoula, Montana in an attempt to organize the workers in the lumber and logging industries there. As part of their organizing strategy, the Wobblies set up soapboxes or other makeshift stages on corners in the business district of Missoula and just started talking. Passersby would sometimes stop and listen and sometimes not. From a contemporary perspective, the Wobblies may seem a bit crazy. At least, from my perspective, when someone is standing on the corner of the street speaking to no one in particular, I assume the person has a mental illness. In the early twentieth century, this type of soapbox preaching was common. Think of it as a direct action blog. The Wobblies weren't the only ones preaching on corners. The Salvation Army had their own soapbox in downtown Missoula, as well as a couple of other organizations. The speaking on the corner wasn't exactly the problem; it was the listening.

According to a few accounts, the first wave of Wobbly speakers didn't generate much interest. That changed when a woman who called herself “Gurley” came to town.

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn was nineteen years old and six months pregnant when she hit Missoula. She'd been agitating for workers' causes since she was a little kid and her parents took her to socialist meetings in Brooklyn. In her autobiography, *The Rebel Girl*, she traces her activism back to her four great-grandfathers, who'd all taken up arms to fight the British occupation of Ireland. Her presence in Missoula was one more incident

in a long heritage of actions geared toward social justice.

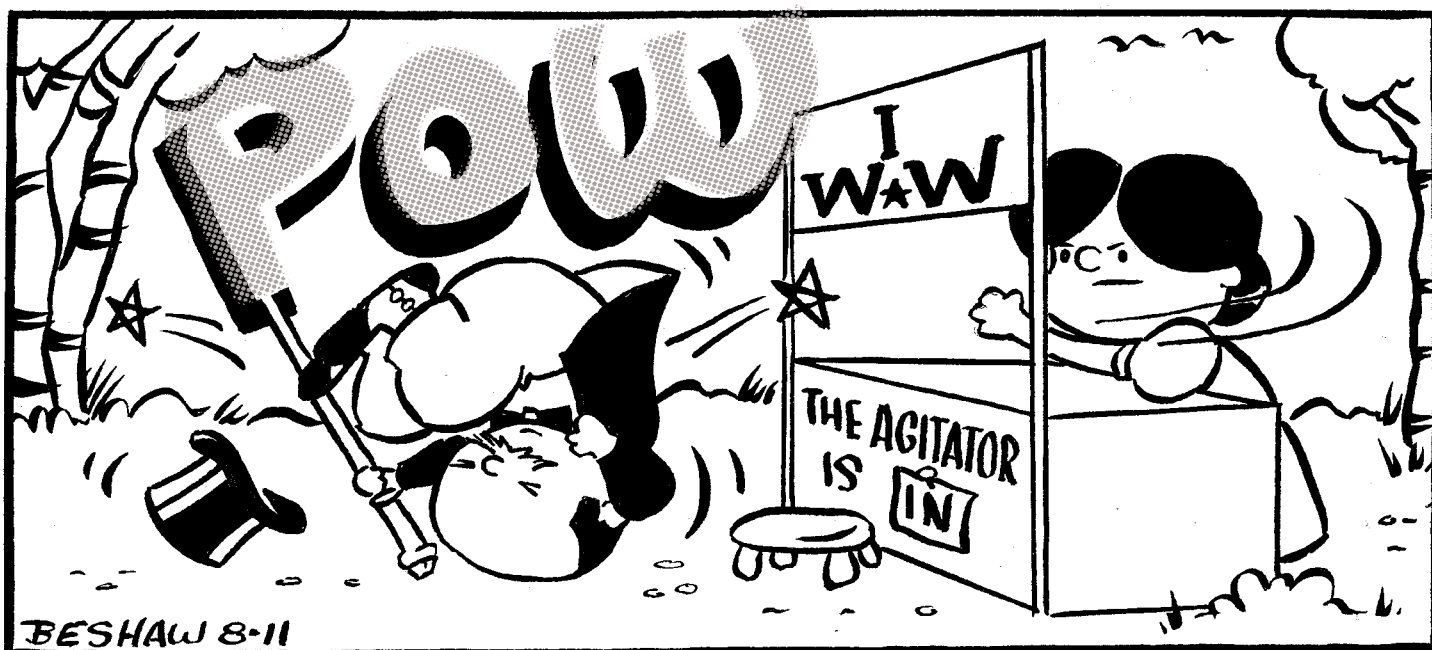
Even at nineteen, Gurley was famous among the workers. She did two things differently than other speakers. First, she drew a crowd. This shouldn't be ignored. People in power will always let you say whatever you want as long as no one is listening. When others gather around to hear what you have to say, those in power lend an ear to hear if their power is being threatened. And it was. In particular, Gurley attacked the local employment agencies. These agents were in cahoots with various lumber and logging companies to hire migrant workers for a week or so, charge them a finder's fee for the job, split the fee between the agency and the company, fire the worker after a week, and hire a new sucker. Not only did Gurley criticize this, she set up her soapbox in front of the three most prominent employment agencies and criticized them to their faces. The migrant workers, hearing how the scam worked, hesitated at the doors of the employment agencies.

The second thing Gurley did was attack the soldiers from Fort Missoula. They walked past during one of her speeches. She accused them of being hired thugs for corporate interests. They went to city leaders and threatened to “clean out the whole bunch” of Wobblies. The sheriff intervened to keep the peace.

The peace didn't last for long.

Under pressure from employment agencies and local industry leaders, the city council passed an ordinance restricting free speech. Three Wobblies—including Gurley's husband, Jack Jones—were arrested. A fourth man who wasn't a Wobbly was also arrested. A guy named Herman Tucker was working in the U.S. Forestry Department office upstairs from the soapbox when one of the Wobblies was pinched for reading the Declaration of Independence. Tucker was so incensed at the Missoula police that he came downstairs, got on the stage, picked up the copy of the Declaration that the Wobbly had dropped, and started reading where the last guy left off. Tucker went to jail with the rest of them.

At this point, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and her fellow Wobblies developed a strategy that they would employ in free



BRAD BESHAW

## People in power will always let you say whatever you want as long as no one is listening.

speech battles throughout the western U.S. for the next decade. They put out word for all “foot-loose rebels to come at once” and aid in the fight for free speech. Loggers, miners, migrant workers, and other activists hopped on trains from all over the country (though mostly from Butte and Spokane) to join the orators in Missoula. Gurley picked several spots throughout the town’s business district and sent speakers to all of them. The sheriff and his men chased them all down and nabbed them. When one speaker got arrested, the next one took his place. The Wobblies were careful to give their speeches before dinnertime at the jail so that the city would be forced to foot the bill for feeding them. The city, for their part, made sure to release the Wobblies before breakfast time.

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn was arrested at this time. For some reason (perhaps because she was so young, famous, and pregnant), she wasn’t housed with the other inmates. She demanded a jury trial. Charges were dropped. This triggered the next step in the rebellion. When speakers were arrested, they started demanding jury trials. This meant that the city would have to foot the bill to prosecute dozens of “disturbing the peace” cases. They’d have to populate dozens of juries. The activists added to this problem by refusing to leave jail—even when the jailors tried to kick them out—until their trials. Suddenly, the city had to foot the bill for housing and feeding these protestors.

Meanwhile, the Wobblies kept up their speeches. Before long, the Missoula jail was

overcrowded. Speakers were imprisoned in the basement of a downtown building. The Wobblies, never a quiet group, spent so much time in jail singing, arguing, yelling out the window, and generally raising a ruckus that local businesses started pressuring city officials to resolve the situation. The mayor first tried diplomacy. He sent the chief of police to meet with Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. He offered to stop harassing the speakers provided they just stay off a couple of downtown streets. The Wobblies refused. They had the city against the ropes. There was no reason to back off. The next day, city officials gave up. All of the charges were dropped. The orators were all released. The Wobblies were able to continue speaking and organizing.

This became the pattern for larger free-speech fights in a handful of cities from San Diego to Spokane. A whole host of anti-free-speech ordinances were defeated. Workers were able to organize to bring about social changes that built the American middle class: the eight-hour workday, the five-day work week, employer-sponsored health care, minimum wage, child labor laws, overtime compensation, Social Security, equal rights for women and minorities in the workplace, disability insurance, unemployment insurance, collective bargaining, employer-sponsored pension plans, etc.

Perhaps this is why, when we study American history in high school, we all spend so much time studying Elizabeth

Gurley Flynn, the Wobblies, and the freedoms that unions have earned for us. Perhaps this is why, when we talk about heroes who have fought for our freedom, we talk about activists like Gurley and the twenty-four San Luis Obispanos who showed up at the county supervisors’ meeting. Perhaps this is why I always see bumper stickers that say, “If you value your freedom, thank a protestor.”

Okay, maybe I’m being a little facetious with that last paragraph.

I do want to take a few seconds, though, to recognize that sometimes activism does work. Sometimes, we do affect positive change in our lives. Sometimes it only takes twenty-four people to do it. Sometimes those twenty-four people couldn’t sit down and have a conversation about politics for three minutes without wanting to strangle each other, but if they can recognize when they do agree and focus on that one specific thing, they can get something done.

It’s easy to feel jaded about contemporary politics. It’s okay to feel that way. I look at my whole list of freedoms that American workers earned during the twentieth century, and I can’t ignore that most of those things are being threatened today. It bums me out. I also recognize when cynicism becomes a dead-end street. At those moments, it’s helpful to consider the paths people have blazed out of that cul-de-sac.

—Sean Carswell





LAZY MICK

JIM RULAND

**“The  
pointlessness  
of pretty much  
everything.”**

# Hell's Mouth

## A Disquieting Look at Lisbon

I've never met a tattooer who wasn't interested in the occult.

They traffic in symbols, the currency of occultism, and inscribe them on the flesh.

There are two kinds of tattooers: those who remain willfully ignorant of occult symbols and what they represent and those who make it their business to know.

The former will tattoo gang signs on your neck, swastikas on your face, upside down pentagrams on your solar plexus. All they care about is the money.

Pedro Soos belongs to the latter camp.

I stumbled upon his shop, the Queen of Hearts, in Lisbon this summer. I'd rented an apartment around the corner. I passed by it every day on my way to the conference I was attending. I'd wave or say hello to the tattooed people spilling out of the shop as I made my way down the narrow, cobblestone streets of Bairro Alto. Eventually, I went inside and asked to look at the books. I spent a half-hour or so examining the artists' work. I wasn't sure if I wanted a tattoo, but I was interested in the art. How the style in southwest Europe differed from the style in the southwest United States.

Pedro's work jumped out at me. Traditional sailor art, bold lines, stylized shading.

I wanted some. Unfortunately, he was booked through the week, which was not unusual. Pedro works out of tattoo shops all over Europe. His clients don't cancel their appointments because if they miss out he won't be back for a while, and he rarely does walk-ins. There was a music festival in town and the shop's assistant was able to move some appointments around to squeeze me in the following day.

“What do you want?” she asked.

I wanted to get something that would remind me of my time in Lisbon. Sardines came to mind. The oily little fish that thrives off of Portugal's five hundred miles of coastline. If you've ever enjoyed a tin of sardines, chances are they came from Portugal.

“A mermaid with a sardine,” I said.

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I didn't come to Lisbon to get tattooed. I came to attend the Dzanc

Books/Disquiet International Literary Program. The conference combined a writing workshop with panels, readings, and excursions. It takes its name from *The Book of Disquiet* by Fernando Pessoa, the James Joyce of Portugal.

*The Book of Disquiet* is an odd book. It's a disjointed collection of prose reflections about life, work, dreams, and the pointlessness of pretty much everything.

The conference organizers asked all participants to read *The Book of Disquiet* before they arrived in Lisbon. I started reading it a few weeks before I left San Diego. I didn't make it very far. It's not the kind of book you can read straight through.

“I'm nobody, nobody. I don't know how to feel or think or love. I'm a character in a novel as yet unwritten, hovering in the air and undone before I've even existed, amongst the dreams of someone who never quite managed to breathe life into me.”

The whole thing is like this.

There's no plot, little dialogue, and only one character: the narrator Bernardo Soares, a Lisbon bookkeeper. I tried to finish the book on the plane, but I only made it about halfway through.

This was a mistake. I should have been sleeping.

I slept poorly in Portugal. I never adjusted to the time change. After attending events and exploring the city, I'd come back to my apartment and write and when I couldn't write any more I read *The Book of Disquiet*, a book so relentlessly bleak I felt poleaxed with loneliness.

“When we suffer, human pain seems infinite. But not even human pain is infinite, because nothing human is infinite, nor is our pain ever anything more than a pain that we have.”

*Who was this guy?* I'd wonder as the sun came up.

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Fernando Pessoa was born in 1888 and died of cirrhosis of the liver in 1935. In the introduction to *The Book of Disquiet*, William Boyd calls him “a dedicated but discreet alcoholic.”

He died an unknown, but left behind a trunk filled with thousands of poems, journals,

stories, plays, and unfinished manuscripts. That's where *The Book of Disquiet* comes from. No one is sure which order its 250 or so “chapters” should go. Different editors have put them in different order.

I think this would have amused Pessoa, but he's notoriously hard to pin down. Pessoa also invented authors. He was not content to simply write essays or poems. He created personas to go with them and gave these authors bios, attributes, quirks and, of course, their own literary style. He even worked up their astrological charts.

There's the poet Ricardo Reis. The futurist Álvaro de Campos. The astrologer Raphael Baldya. The pagan António Mora. And the Baron of Teive, who, sadly, committed suicide before he could finish his manuscript. Fluent in both English and French, Pessoa also created alter egos in these languages as well. The appropriately named Charles Robert Anon and Alexander Search were English. Jean Seul composed in French.

The scholar Simon Jenner writes that Pessoa had given birth to “a school of poets: all wholly individual, corresponding with each other, arguing over their differing styles and literary approaches.”

It would be like starting a new band every time you write a new song and giving each of those bands its own logo, recording history, and bios for all its members. Interesting but exhausting.

Pessoa called them heteronyms. There were seventy-two in all.

Seventy-two.

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As I sleepwalked around Lisbon, I saw Pessoa's image everywhere. On postcards and coffee cups, T-shirts, and posters. He clearly possessed enormous talent. He was a mad scientist with words. A wizard. He was the goddamn James Joyce of Portugal.

But he was also a kook, a misfit who was out of step with the rest of Portugal's literary scene.

I wondered if the average Lisboan had any idea as to what kind of writer Pessoa was.

I wanted to learn more about Pessoa, but when I asked fellow attendees about



JACKIE RUSTED

# Shadowing his shadow.

*The Book of Disquiet*, they confessed to not having read the book.

I sensed that all around me a conversation about Pessoa was taking place, but I was having trouble finding it.

One of my favorite cafes in Lisbon was named after a short-lived literary magazine that Pessoa started. Caffe Orpheu. I spent a lot of time there drinking strong Portuguese coffee, staring at the blue wallpaper, hoping something would sink in.

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"There are a lot of things people don't know about Pessoa," Pedro said over the drone of a tattooing machine.

I like to read while getting tattooed, but Pedro wanted to know what brought me to Lisbon. I told him about the conference and, as it turned out, he knew a great deal about Pessoa. One of those things was the poet's interest in the occult.

While Pessoa was in his twenties, his aunt turned him on to the occult and he learned enough to consider becoming a successful astrologer. He was said to have been a talented medium and telepath. At the precise moment his friend committed suicide in Paris by drinking strychnine, Pessoa was overcome with a feeling of great desolation.

He was also a friend of Aleister Crowley, the English occult enthusiast who went by The Great Beast 666 and inspired a bad-ass Black Sabbath song. Crowley came to visit

Pessoa in Portugal. After a dispute with his girlfriend that resulted in her leaving Crowley in Lisbon, the magician enlisted Pessoa's aid in playing a cruel trick on her.

At a rocky promontory overlooking the Atlantic called Boca do Inferno, Hell's Mouth, Crowley left a suicide note covered in cryptic signs.

Crowley slipped into Spain and Pessoa brought the note to the attention of the newspapers, deciphering the signs and claiming to have seen Crowley's ghost.

Pessoa's hoax created a stir, but when Crowley turned up at an art exhibit in Berlin a few days later, the affair was forgotten. Pessoa wrote several hundred pages of a novel based on the incident, but they've never been translated.

Crowley had a lot of famous friends. Pedro explained, but Pessoa wasn't one of them. He was the opposite of famous. Pessoa, however, had a gift for communicating with people in other realms.

To Pedro's way of thinking, this raises some interesting questions about those heteronyms. Was Pessoa a writer of enormous gifts? Or, did he channel those voices from beyond? Are the heteronyms the work of an underappreciated genius? Or, are they voices of the dead?

Pedro shrugged and went back to work on the design taking shape on my leg. A siren with tentacles in her hair clutching a sardine.

That night I went to a party and had a late dinner of grilled octopus. Afterward,

I walked for miles and miles. Make that kilometers and kilometers. I walked the wide avenues along the river and the narrow lanes climbing up to Bairro Alto, passing many of the places Bernardo Soares describes in *The Book of Disquiet*. I felt as if I was walking in Pessoa's footsteps, shadowing his shadow.

When I returned to my apartment, I felt wide awake. Restless even. I filled the tub with warm water and soaked my tired feet and new tattoo in the bathtub while reading Pessoa's *The Book of Disquiet*.

"Which of us turning to look back down the road along where there is no return, could say that we had walked that road as we should have?"

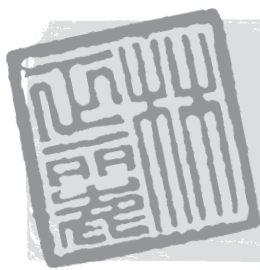
Pessoa's words struck a chord, but I was finding it difficult to concentrate. It was my last night in Portugal and I was filled with feelings of anticipation and regret. Thinking of all the things I hadn't seen, I told myself I'd come back, but knew I probably wouldn't. I didn't want to go, but I was ready to leave.

It dawned on me that the most interesting conversation I'd had about Fernando Pessoa all week had taken place not in a classroom or lecture hall, but in a tattoo shop.

I pulled the plug and watched my mermaid broach the surface as water slipped down the drain.

—Jim Ruland





# MONSTER OF FUN

AMY ADOYZIE

**“A soft anthem for hard feelings.”**

## Serving Memory

There was a time when a mixed tape was an actual cassette tape, a plastic rectangle encasing two small wheels looped together by yards of glossy, dark ribbon. The best mixed tape creators were able to create a playlist that was personal and heartfelt, flowed seamlessly, and most importantly, fit just perfectly within the thirty or forty-five minutes of tape without cutting off a song or leaving too much blank fuzz at the end.

There was a time when I didn't hold much regard for the art of mixed tapes. This inability to appreciate mixed tapes came from the same place that greatly disliked compilations and soundtracks. I felt that if a band or artist is interesting or good enough to introduce to me, why not just let me hear the whole record so I can fully absorb their work? A single song, in a seemingly random list of other single songs, felt unsatisfying.

My frustration with mixed tapes, however, dissolved last week when I heard a song.

I was listening to an online music service when the album that had been playing ended and it automatically ran an algorithm to play a selection of songs based on the sonic vibrations of the record that I had initially chosen to listen. I can't even remember the album I had chosen, but the equation by which they chose the subsequent songs must have looked like this:

$$-\text{Heartbreak/Plaid}^{(4y+x)+3^{(\text{American} + \text{folk})+4x}}$$

$$\frac{\text{Random selection of songs}}{7y(\text{Acoustic Guitar}^{\text{Midwest}})^2 - 2(\text{Whiskey}^x)\text{Beard}}$$

A dozen songs streamed through; background music for blog reading. It was during the first run of the chorus that my heart beat out of time:

*I told you to be patient  
I told you to be fine  
And I told you to be balanced  
And I told you to be kind*

It was Bon Iver's "Skinny Love," a song on a CD with three dozen others, each track

with the capacity to disarm me whenever they unexpectedly stream from speakers.

*Oh, this is what a mixed tape is supposed to do*, I thought. Perhaps it's not solely about the songs and their intention when you initially receive it—it's about how they haunt you years later after you've forgotten about them.

\*\*\*

Sensory memory routinely strikes me without actively prompting it. That's the thing, the memory is conjured inadvertently as you experience something and you really have no choice on whether or not to remember it.

The smell of dried lawn clippings mixed with the faint smoke of a nearby grill in my southeast Portland neighborhood reminds me of Huarong, Hunan, China where I used to take nightly jogs on a dirt track next to a pile of smoldering, burnt garbage. When I hovered over a toilet seat at a roadside gas station somewhere off of Route 66, I was struck with the memory of half-standing/half-sitting in that same position over a toilet at a venue in Gainesville, Florida at Fest 3 while simultaneously spilling beer and pissing on my jeans. The sweet and tart flavor of balsamic pickled figs we bought at a local fair tasted like the fruits that didn't have English names that my mom bought at the Asian supermarket when I was a kid.

That single song, by a band I don't know much about, manages to turn my heart upside down, shaking it to see what will fall out of the narrow passages of my arteries. Whatever pours out settles at the bottom of my gut for the rest of the day. A lone guitar and a wounded voice remind me of loves lost and plans for futures that only live in that dreamland that's conjured just before I fall asleep. A soft anthem for hard feelings that still linger even though you thought you lost them in the rubble of time.

*And now all your love is wasted  
And who the hell was I?  
I'm breaking at the bridges  
And at the end of all your lines*

I am trying to remember the name of the mixed tape, but it's not coming to me.

How many mixes are out there that are called "Mixed Tape for Mixed Feelings"? Maybe I had a few of those. I can't remember.

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Perhaps it's due to the fact that my other senses are able to recall memories so easily that my sense of touch is handicapped and seldom elicits any real moments from my past. It is rare that I'm reminded of anything from the touch of my hand, but I have one standout memory of a memory from feeling the fabric at my back.

It was another muggy, stagnant night with me struggling to find sleep beneath a dusty mosquito net on a hard mattress. The fan that hung above the bed brought no reprieve from the heat because the net deflected any air that spun off the blades. I was in a T-shirt and panties and had resisted sleeping topless because I wasn't interested in offering more flesh for the mosquitoes to feast on. In a final bout of fitful sleep, I grabbed the hem of my shirt, pulled it over my head, and leaned back down onto the coarse sheets. A vague memory worked its way across my body. The sensation of undressing in bed was something I hadn't felt in almost a year at that point, as I had been living in Bangladesh for as long. I pulled a rough, thin sheet over me, pining for the feeling of another body next to me enveloped in a soft quilt.

Maybe it's a good thing that my touch sensory memory is lacking, because those reminders are difficult to shake.

My day-to-day, practical-usage-for-life-memory is really awful. I could unintentionally not remember large chunks of my life if not for the people I have around me to remind me with stories of idiocy, charm, awful decisions, and perceptible glories. I have had friends remind me of events where they weren't even present, but they remember what I had told them.

*Don't you remember when this thing happened to you that you told me about?* My friend would ask.

*How do you know about it if you weren't there?* I would respond.



STEVE LARDER

**Perhaps  
it's not solely about the songs  
and their intention when you initially receive it**

**— it's about how they haunt you years later after  
you've forgotten about them.**

*Because you told me!*

It's like an odd game of telephone, spanning space and time. It also makes me feel like I'm renting space in the memories of my friends, a small nook where they are holding onto something for me because I can't be bothered with it.

Six years ago, I began a photo project where I snap a self-portrait every single day. This exercise in self-documentation has been fascinating because I've been able to see myself age, one day at a time. As a very visual person, these photographs have helped me to recall so many moments that

would have been lost in the cavernous space of my skull. However, I have to admit there are memories that are best left forgotten. Although those images may be difficult to see again, I'm grateful they exist, unlike the third year of my project where I stopped my self-portraits midway through the year because my depression had so wholly consumed me that documenting seemed completely useless. Even so, the absence of those photos carries weight.

Occasionally, I find myself being envious of folks who have impressive memories. But I wonder if it can become a burden, the shadow

of the past always present at the front of your mind. I've grown so accustomed to my memories by accident that I can appreciate them and their unexpected visits.

Sometimes memory serves us right. Other times, memory serves us wrong. So long as memories serve us, I'll keep listening to its songs.

—Amy Adoyzie  
amyadoyzie.com  
365 Days Project:  
flickr.com/photos/amyadoyzie

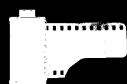




Knowing that I had a swarm of deadlines on August 1st, I did what any normal person would: anything but work on the projects that were due. Here's how I master procrastination:







**Shanty Cheryl's Photo Page**  
Night Birds at VLHS





**“Leave your mark, not a skid mark.”**

# Kill City

I love my home here in Los Angeles. I don't necessarily love every aspect of the city, but as a whole, I've enjoyed growing up, living, and working here up to the present. For all its traffic, serial killers, smog, and multiple acres of helicopter-dropped Malathion spray over my past years here, the City of Angels has been pretty darned good to me, my familia, and friends. I suppose like any other large city, some people can get a misconception or two about L.A. It's kind of like how some people feel about New York City. They'll say something to the effect of, "NYC? That place is a filthy dirty rat trap." I beg to differ; especially in the sense that in just about any major metropolitan city you find yourself in, you're gonna find a level of pollution, crime, or varying shades of run-downedness (hey, I just came up with an adjective, right there). Going one step further, I shouldn't even limit that strictly to major metropolitan areas. I've witnessed some real creepfests of smaller cities/towns dotted across this country in my time, some that even unnerve *me* with that unmistakable shade of red emblazoned across the back of their neck—keep in mind, I'm as honky as you can get.

I totally get our weather being a big deciding factor as the reason a majority of folks pick up and relocate here. Yes indeed, our fairly mild "seasons" are pretty damn consistent. They make for the perfect alternative for those who've had it up to their eyeballs with the deathly, penetrating winter freeze or summers drenched with so much humidity it makes the suffering sweaties want to stab other passersby in the lungs with a popsicle stick.

Totally get it. Not to mention that here in L.A., tornados or hurricanes are gnarly offerings of Mother Nature that are watched on The Weather Channel rather than in horror outside our front room windows. Yeah, we have earthquakes, but the most detrimental ones L.A. has experienced are (knock on wood) few and far between. I'll take getting jolted up outta bed over getting my roof ripped off by wind or my house getting flooded with water up to the ceiling fans any day, y'know?

Another major decision people set up roost in Hell A is for their careers, jobs, and the seemingly never-ending amount of "aspirations of being a star." Don't get me wrong—I'm all thumbs-up for the folks who

possess the skills to pay the bills, those who would happily sacrifice their left nut (or boob) to make it in this town that's run by a band of shady butchers manning the monstrous meat grinder that is the entertainment machine. But then there are the less than fortunate, the poor souls who couldn't cut it even if you handed 'em the finest samurai sword.

Let's take Derwood (yes, that's his real name), for example. Back in the late '80s/early '90s, my holmes Mark was apartment and house hopping in Hollywood, living the crazy-insane punk rock life amid a colorful assortment of revolving characters he called roommates. Derwood was one of those roommates. He wasn't as crazy-insane as Mark or the other peeps he shared a place with. You see, Derwood had recently arrived on the Greyhound in L.A. with a guitar in hand, eyes ablaze with stars, and a heart full of "Go get 'em, tiger!" all the way from Iowa. It was his time. But, much like Fruit Stripe gum, the exciting flavor of Hollywood wore off rather quickly for Derwood, and the hopes of making it with his guitar were snuffed out rather quickly. Faced with the impending doom of empty pockets, Derwood enrolled himself into DeVry University, took a crack at some sort of electronics degree, and tried to get reliable career training under his belt. Mark said the last time he saw him, Derwood was living inside of a closet, with a stack of Betamax machines sitting around him and a screwdriver in his hand. Rock and roll.

It was also par for the course when the (yikes) hair metal bands were hovering all about the Sunset Strip back in the androgynous, Aqua-Netted heydays of Hollywood like a bunch of retarded Japanese beetles (no slight intended to my friends of the rising sun—I'm merely referring to the clumsy, shiny-green beetles that always end up clunking into people's heads). Any high-haired yutz donning (ulp!) zebra print with enough money to get out to L.A. was trying like crazy to make it big, and boy, what a sight that was.

Same went for the city of Seattle when the whole grunge thing puked into everybody's lap. I vividly remember a few people who gave it the old college try at grunge after the hair metal business wasn't roping in the label offers as they had expected. Many made the trek from L.A. up to Seattle, as if they were flannelled-up miners dead set on staking their claim up in a city that was being overrun with

an ocean of Eddie Vedder douchebaggery—scrambling for fool's gold.

Every so often, I hear from others that, "The people in Los Angeles are a bunch of rude assholes," or "Everyone's too cool/full of themselves in that city." Now, I can't speak for everyone here, but I feel confident in saying that a good number of people who they are getting that vibe from are more than likely folks that aren't even *from* here to begin with, and I know damn well I'm not the only one who shares this opinion. To clarify: not all transplants. I've had the pleasure of making friends with L.A. transplants over the years, good friends at that. My guitarist Jeff originally hails from Philly, PA (say something dicky to him about the Flyers, I fucking *dare* you) and my bass slinger Tom's original stomping grounds were in Fenton, MO (just outside of St. Louis, close to where Mr. Chuck Berry was spawn!). My homeboy Todd Taylor, the publisher of this very magazine you hold in your lil' hands, isn't even originally from L.A., and that goes as well for Mr. Lemmy Kilmister of Motörhead, but you know what? I consider all four of these gents bona fide Angelinos in their own right, and not just because of the many years they've lived here, but because they've each contributed something of substance to our fair city and have rightly earned their keep, unlike a good share of the meandering dipshits who sponge around, do nothing but party, and then start whining about how terrible L.A. is.

Don't like it? Fucking split, and that goes double for the spoiled-ass locals who share the "I've tried nothing and am all out of ideas" mentality, too. It's exile time, baby, and our own Art Fuentes can either lead you out, or throw/drag you in an outward direction.

My pal Marina, one of my wife's very good friends who has been all over this crazy planet, lives by a simple rule when visiting the far corners of the earth, as well as her day-to-day life here in L.A.: "Be a traveler, not a tourist." It's such a great statement, be it when moving to another town, going on any trip or vacation for any length of time, going out on tour, or even re-discovering your own town. So much more can be made out of your travels in doing so. The first time I visited NYC some years back while my sister was living out there, I was really taken back by just how friendly the old school locals were.



MARCOS SIREF

## North, south, east and west — wherever you go, there you is.

I remember getting ass-backwards in plotting my train directions, trying to find the most direct route to go check out the Chelsea Hotel. I finally walked up to some old guy behind the counter in a market, sitting there reading a paper, asking him to point me in the right direction. After telling him what cross streets I needed to get to, he looked up at me and said, "California, right? Let me guess. Los Angeles?" Uh-oh, I thought. Shit, here it comes. "Yessir, you'd be right. Is that a bad thing?" I reply with a smirk on my face. He smiled, threw down his paper on the counter and said, "On the contrary, but most of the time you people can be pretty goddamned obnoxious," and then we both started laughing.

The old duder went on to tell me about his children who were out in California and asked what I was doing in NYC. "Visiting my sister. First time I've been in your town." He asked me what I liked so far, and I told him the Lower East Side was pretty interesting, being that I'm a big music fan, especially of New York bands the Ramones, NY Dolls, and KISS. "Never heard of 'em, but if they were from New York, I'm sure they were good," he said, pointing out which train station I needed to hit. Similar talks with shop keeps happened while I was out there, some as friendly as funny-surly newspaper guy, and then some not-so-friendly, but it really hit home the perspective of how some

people's buttholish behavior can land the BUTTHOLE rubber stamp across the name of your town.

North, south, east and west—wherever you go, there you is.

Leave your mark, not a skid mark.

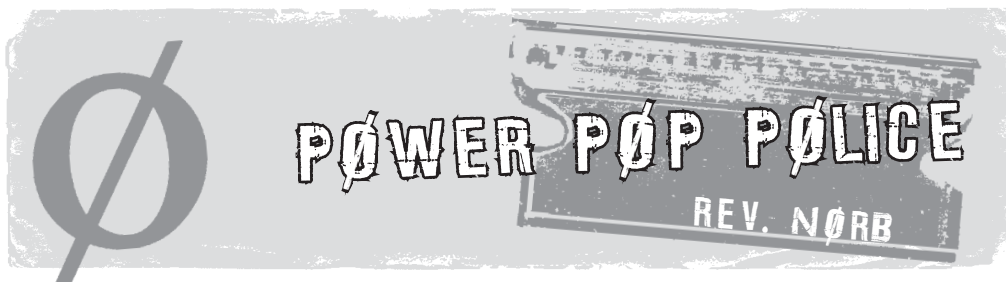
Quote the front of Dave Drive's (original drummer for The Gears) bass drum head:

"L.A.'S THE PLACE"

You damn straight.

I'm Against It,  
—Designated Dale  
designateddale@yahoo.com





**“Impending  
carnival of  
AWESOME.”**

## ALL I WANT IS THE ((GIMME SOME)) TRUTH

Tomorrow's my birthday! REJOICE!!! REJOICE, YOU COCKSUCKERS!!! REJOICE!!! For birthday festivities, i plan on riding my Schwinn® Hornet™ to a secluded area, drinking an entire two-liter bottle of Pepsi Max™, playing the first Generation X album, and reading digitized versions of old *Justice League* comic books on my smartphone until my eyes boil out of their sockets or my blood pressure pops my heart or some dagnab foo or another calls me on my comic book reading device and tries to make me go somewhere worse. I live big. This impending carnival of AWESOME leads to a simple but pungent question: Not to overplay the Crabby Old Guy hand right off the bat, but WHAT THE FUCK IS UP WITH THE FIRST GENERATION X ALBUM these days? Like, you CAN'T GET THE DAMN THING anymore, at least not in the configuration to which i'm used to. Now, sure, you can still get the original UK version of that album ((digitally, anyway—the vinyl has been OOP since cigarettes were under a dollar a pack))—the one that starts with “From The Heart” and includes “Listen” “Too Personal” and “Invisible Man”—but you CAN'T get the US version, which starts with “Gimme Some Truth” and includes “Wild Youth” “Your Generation” and “Wild Dub.” I mean, i fucking GET it—the US thing was a repackage where the Chrysalis Records equivalent of Dilton Doily replaced three tracks with random shit he thought would be more conducive to the Yankee dollar ((which must've worked to some extent...he got MY \$5.96))—thus, the UK version is what the band and all those sensible Limeys think is the “real” album; the US version is just some crap they cobbled together to fleece the rubes in Poughkeepsie. Yet, to me, the American Franken-album is the REAL first Generation X album; the UK version is just some amusing regional ethnic variant, like when you go to McDonalds® in Boston and they have some kinda Lobster McNuggets™ on the menu. Now, one would imagine—in these heady futuristic days of VCRs and Compact Discs and Chu-Bops™ and what-not—that, were one to buy said first Generation X album as marketed today, the powers-that-be, in their infinite generosity ((and infinite attempts to get some fuckhead like myself to purchase essentially the same album for the eight-hundred-and-thirteenth time)) would include the four songs AWOL from the UK version as bonus tracks, thus it

would be a simple matter of dragging-and-dropping or craftily pushing a few buttons to sequence the album in the desired order, right? HA! LUCKILY FOR PURPOSES OF MY WRITING THIS COLUMN, THAT IS INDEED NOT THE CASE! Whilst the newly-repackaged version does include “Wild Youth” “Wild Dub” and “Your Generation,” it does NOT include their John Lennon cover, “Gimme Some Truth.” In any event, since you can get eleven of the US album's twelve tracks in one place, a prudent soul might wonder just how hard it could possibly be to track down a digital copy of the twelfth and final song, “Gimme Some Truth,” so that the album's songs could be magically crammed into my phone and i can go have my big day of drinking Pepsi Max™ and dying out by the river. Well, first we need to qualify this statement: It is not hard to find \*a\* recording of Generation X playing “Gimme Some Truth.” In point of fact, it's not challenging in the least. It was on the “Perfect Hits” compilation CD that's been out since time immemorial, you can pay ninety-nine pennies to download it from The Man, it's all over the place. In point of fact, i've got it sitting on my laptop right now. *Problem solved?* PSHAW! IT IS TO LAUGH! Of COURSE the problem isn't solved! The problem is not that there are NO versions of “Gimme Some Truth” out there but that EACH AND EVERY VERSION OF “GIMME SOME TRUTH” THAT IS CURRENTLY COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE is the WRONG VERSION. All the “Gimme Some Truth”'s left in this world are the PEEL SESSIONS version that constituted the b-side of the “King Rocker” 45, meaning that ABSOLUTELY ZERO PERCENT of the “Gimme Some Truth”'s in this world are the US album version! *Zero! Zip! Nada!* And i SURELY can't use a different version of “Gimme Some Truth” to lead off the album, that would be, like, “Gimme Some False,” wouldn't it? The album version of “Gimme Some Truth”—and, by implication, the re-construction of the US version of the first Generation X album based on materials currently on the market—IS ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE. It's not on any currently in-print vinyl, CD, digital download, or magical spaceman brainwaves. Well, not to put too fine a point on it, but, goddammit, *YOU CAN'T TALK TO BILLY IDOL THAT WAY!* Actually, hmm... scratch that assertion, it appears you CAN

and HAVE. Now, at this point, you might be asking yourself, in your high, warbly, pitch-shifted Martian voice, “By golly, Rev. Nørb, do you mean to tell me that the album version of ‘Gimme Some Truth’ has NEVER been available on the never-to-be-outdated compact disc format? That a true post-vinyl/ cassette US version of the eponymous *Generation X* album has never been available to today's Modern Now Youth of the Digital Sub-Realm?” Well, in actuality, Señor Deimos Breath, i do NOT mean to tell you that. In point of fact, such an utterance would be a bold-faced lie: A CD version of the US version of the first Generation X album was, in fact, released back in the 90's. And, it being pretty much my favorite album of all time and all, i dutifully purchased a copy. However, i kind of wound up taking the thing out back and shooting it behind the ear ((or, more likely, i whipped it off the porch at my old place at the gas pumps across the street)) because it—and all other known copies of the US version of the first Generation X album on CD—had a HIDEOUS TERRIBLE AWFUL PRESSING DEFECT, whereby, from around “From The Heart” thru “One Hundred Punks,” thIngS sTArT sOUNdIng aLL wARPy. The tempo SPEEDS UP and s l o w s d o w n perceptibly—apparently not to the degree that Dilton at Chrysalis Records could notice it, but enough to drive a Princess & The Pea type like myself stark raving bonkers. I played it for a couple of friends, who, like dipshits, noticed nothing amiss—but then i played it for my bandmate, Paul #1, who, to his credit, was immediately like “ICK!!! WHAT THE FUCK???” which confirmed my observations that the thing was abominably borked. I then believe i destroyed the disc in a fit of rage—rage not so much over the manufacturing defect, but over the fact that no one but Paul could hear it. *PHILISTINES! LUDDITES! SCHMUCKS!* I checked out a few other copies of the CD; they're all equally fucked. So, let's recap: All I want to do for my birthday is to put my favorite album on my phone, drive my bike down to the river, listen to my favorite album, read tiny digital versions of children's entertainment from the 1960's, eat SweeTarts® and drink Pepsi Max™ until my superior vena cava fucking explodes. This is a really fucking simple, straightforward, low-maintenance birthday desire. No hats of invisibility, no jetpacks, no promenade of well-oiled Asian frauleins, nothing at all



ALEX BARRETT

The entire contents of the planet are at my fingertips  
as long as i remember to pay my internet bill.

exotic. And I CANNOT FUCKING ACCOMPLISH THIS—this fucking HUMBLEST of birthday desires—this most LOW-MAINTENANCE of SOLAR CYCLE ANNIVERSARY DEMANDS—because the version of my favorite album that i hold dear—the version with which most Americans are ((or were)) familiar—has been either OUT OF PRINT or DEFECTIVE SINCE THE fucking EIGHTIES or something. AND IT’S ON A FUCKING MAJOR LABEL and has goddamn BILLY IDOL on it, to boot!!! Seriously. Seriously. HOW FUCKING HARD can it be to keep BILLY IDOL’S FIRST RECORD in print? How much of a goddamn strain on their bottom line could it be to click a mouse a few times and put the REAL album up on amazon-dot-whatever? RECORDS AREN’T EVEN REAL THINGS ANYMORE!!! THEY’RE JUST A BUNCH OF PIXELS AND WAVEFORMS AND CRAP!!! OH, HOW DAUNTING, WE CAN’T KEEP THE FIRST GENERATION X ALBUM IN PRINT, THERE’S JUST TOO MANY MOUSE CLICKS INVOLVED!!! WE JUST DON’T HAVE THE BANDWIDTH TO UPLOAD THE RIGHT VERSION OF “GIMME SOME TRUTH” BECAUSE EVERYONE AT THE OFFICE IS WATCHING

KITTY VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE!!! SEE, IF YOU’D HAVE LET US TAX BLANK CASSETTES LIKE WE WANTED, WE’D HAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR THESE RIDICULOUS DEMANDS!!! NOW SHUT UP AND BUY ANOTHER EIGHT-DOLLAR RECORD STORE DAY 45!!! ((incidentally, you know what ELSE is fucked? “Clash City Rockers.” There’s the normal version of it, which led off the US edition of the first Clash album. There’s also the UK single version, which is the same recording, but pitched up a half-step, because their producer thought it sounded “a bit flat,” thus—OBVIOUSLY—speeding it up like the fucking Chipmunks was the only answer [[presumably this mental titan got a job at Chrysalis Records when his tenure with the Clash was over]]. If you buy a Clash record with “Clash City Rockers” on it these days, it’s pretty much a crap shoot as to whether you are getting the normal version, or whether you are getting the special Ross Bagdasarian/Alvin/Simon/Theodore pitched-up version. I wound up ripping the pitched-up version off some CD, then re-lowering the pitch a semitone in Audacity and re-exporting it. AH, THE CONVENIENCE OF MODERN LIVING!!). THUS! When all is said and done, the ONLY WAY i can put my favorite

album on my phone—in this, the much-ballyhooed Information Age™, where pretty much the entire contents of the planet are at my fingertips as long as i remember to pay my internet bill—is to RIP THE FUCKING THING off of a piece of vinyl that i bought thirty-odd years ago. Therefore, i gotta haul out my USB turntable, connect it to my laptop—and then SIT THERE with my fucking THUMB ON THE NEEDLE for three minutes because “GIMME SOME TRUTH” HAS ALWAYS FUCKING SKIPPED ON EVERY COPY OF THE FIRST GENERATION X ALBUM I OWN!!! Pardon my French, but *doesn’t this seem like an AWFUL LOT OF FARTING AROUND just so’s a fella can hear a common-as-dirt punk record the RIGHT way?* Jeebus! To make a long story short, i got the song successfully ripped without skippage, and triumphantly added the twelve songs—in proper Yankee marching order—to my phone’s microSD™ card. Then it rained all day on my birthday so i just sat on the porch and listened to 20/20 instead. Goddamn kids.

Love,  
—Norb





**...means  
I'm being  
mistreated!"**

## **“Two Blinks...”**

For the past few years, I have become increasingly terrified by the idea of growing old, of my body and brain becoming incapacitated. Most of this stems from health facilities and home care. I just finished study in a field that is loosely a part of the health field. I learned of all the disorders that affect speech. These disorders often correlate to bodily dysfunction. When the body withers, we want our loved ones placed somewhere where we can take care of them in their final days. Usually, the disabled fight to hold on and the end takes a while.

I've heard stories of what goes on in state hospitals and the various other institutions, but that's hearsay. It's a shame to think that we still treat people in this country the way we did many years ago. It's considered business as usual.

In the *Press Telegram* a few weeks back I came across an article “Four charged with disabled abuse appear in court.” I instantly perk. In the very first sentence I see the words “house of horrors” and I look at the group home across the street. In a brief synopsis, in San Jose a number of adults with disabilities had been living in a house where they had been locked in small rooms with no food. The cabinets and refrigerator had locks on them. Also, because two dozen dogs lived inside with them, the adults had to endure the stench from months of dog feces. There was no running water and the caretakers stole all the Social Security checks. Business as usual.

This brings me to the description of the group home across the street from my kitchen window. A few years after we had moved into our house, the house across the street was slated for an adult care facility. Flyers were passed to all who lived nearby, describing the facility and how to get in contact if there were problems.

I should have saved that paper. It may just be my powers of observation or the fact that I'm afforded clear views and sounds of the group home from my house, but there have been problems from the get-go with the caretakers. The first problems occurred when they got a runner, which I think is why the fence was built. This guy would bolt out the back door and run down the street. The caretakers, most often female, would run after him, grab him, yell some profanity at him, then kick and slap him back to the house.

Then there were the shift changes at midnight when we would be awakened by loud car radios or the shouting of one caretaker coming and another one going. This would also happen at seven in the morning. It still happens with some frequency. One of the girls who worked there had a thug boyfriend, whose face was pinned down to the front yard by police shortly before they carried him off. Often, I can hear one of the workers shouting at one of the disabled, “I told you not to fucking touch that.”

The parking situation also sucks because most of the workers drive vehicles that leak oil. They are not allowed to park in the driveway so they park all up and down the street, dripping spots in front of all the other residences. Once I had to call over to the house to complain about all the cars and trucks that they left when the owners went on a vacation. The owners don't live there but often store their junk there.

Recently, there have been some dogs that have taken up residency at the home. Maintenance and upkeep is done on the cheap. They put in a fake lawn that sprouts weeds and has visible seams. The wood trim was painted and almost immediately started to peel. The fake plastic flora is a nice touch. Once a month, groceries from the 99 Cent Store show up; a healthy dinner of soda and toast ems for those who live there.

Recently, the owners have taken up throwing out large items; only the items don't get thrown out. They sit on the curb until someone in the community thinks they can use it. Large desks have blocked the sidewalk for three weeks and counting. They're placed standing long ways. It resembles Cadillac Ranch out on Route 66.

People at group homes are bused to day programs in the community. This is another shady practice. Every morning they are picked up and every afternoon they are dropped back off. Last summer, I was washing dishes and the van pulled up. They unloaded the people and then the bus driver started chatting up the girl caretaker. The problem was that the temperature was ninety-something outside and there were disabled people on the bus with no A/C, banging their heads on the windows while listening to the extra loud rap blaring. I called the 1-800 “how's my driving?” number, but I don't think they reprimanded the guy.

Here's my problem: if I become incapacitated, I could be putting my wellbeing in the hands of someone who only sees me as a dollar sign. In my lessened state, I would probably be unable—or too scared—to do anything about it. That's terrifying!

This isn't to say that all the workers at homes are thugs—I've seen some good people—but I think they all need to be good people. Unlike nurses, “caregivers” at group homes don't need special training. They earn accordingly and, most likely, are babysitters. Those workers often wear nurses scrubs when they show up to the home, but it doesn't fool me.

All this said, if/when I have a stroke or a traumatic brain injury, just let me die quickly. Please don't leave me in a home or facility if you don't think I can recover. If you do, please visit often.

Two blinks means I'm being mistreated!

### **PAPER COMICS #5, THE ACCIDENT**

By C.S. McMurray, \$1.00 Australian

This is from South Australia and it was bought by my wife while on vacation as I sat at home nursing a rotted-out tooth. I know nothing about the storyline, if there is one, but it seems to be the story of the ongoing adventures of Ding and Dong. This six-panel short is so easy to digest that I wouldn't even call it an appetizer. It seems that Ding is the aboriginal copilot to, Dong, a hot blonde who crashes into a lemonade stand in the middle of the desert. It looks like Dong's call phrase is “who cares at all,” which gets a bucket-of-lemonade thrown on her. This comic is drawn very old school and has a vaudeville feel to it. I'd love to see this in my local newspaper in the Sunday funnies. If you hear me call someone a “picklehead,” you can blame it on this comic. (papercomics@internode.on.net)

### **ALLOCHTHONOUS POP! #1**

By James Andre & Luke Pickett, \$5.00 Australian

What can I do to get my hands on the ongoing story here? My second Australian gift is wonderful in a horrific way. At first glance, this comic makes no sense. In looking up this word “allochthonous,” it pertains to minerals not formed in the region where found. It starts with a guy standing in a heap of bones with cleaver and chainsaw in hand. It really doesn't come together until the last few panels, which are devilishly drawn in a Nickelodeon cartoon



JASON ARMADILLO

way. The main character wakes up, dresses in what seems to be a koala bear suit, and rides off to entertain at the old folks home. After a dance-off, he fudges the collection records of the recently deceased. He then leaves by a back window and throws his suit out the window. When he gets home, we find out that our guy is really an alien beast that dines on the recently dead. Pretty cool for those of us who are living! At the end, however, we find that someone has left a baby in a basket for our strange alien. He takes it in and the story stops. How do I get the comic to find out what happens with the baby? Great comic with absolutely no words. A nightmare for kids, but a fun ride for adults. (Milk Shadow Books, [lukepickett.com.au](http://lukepickett.com.au), [milkshadowbooks.com](http://milkshadowbooks.com))

#### THE NEXUS POINT #1

By Stewart Cook & Robert Hall, \$ ??  
The last of the comics from South Australia

purchased at Pulp Fiction Comics. Strangely, I believe there is a Pulp Fiction Comics over in Long Beach. So here's the fizz on this book: it's drawn like they were working for early Image Comics. They even say the characters have a Spawn look. The story has characters emerging from teleportation and genetically manufactured rogue security operatives. That's all I have at the moment until number two comes out. It has that rough drawing in black and white that's not really visually stimulating and hard to follow. Not my cup of tea, but I can see the appeal of early Image Comics. (Fist Full Of Comics, Square Peg)

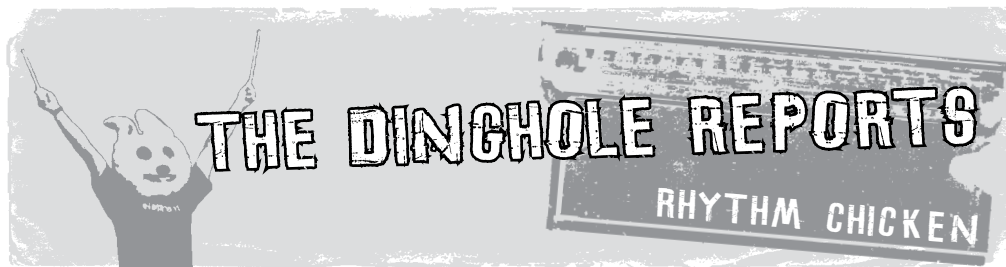
#### SIEGE AT THE HIDEY-HO SALOON

By Ken Eppstein & Bob Ray Starker,  
\$12.00 U.S.

Oh, yeah! Bring the westerns back to the comic format. What a brilliant idea. It's the

original Ghost Rider, but in a much rawer style. I love Nix comics! This comic makes me want to go on a road trip and sit in the back seat all the way. Don't get shocked by the cover price, because the geniuses at Nix have packaged a 7" with tunes you'll be humming, just like the first time you heard the soundtrack to *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*. It even comes with a gold badge that can be worn or used to fill the big hole and spin your vinyl. Screw Cracker Jacks. Yeah, Nix western! As for the storyline, everyone in this town has a streak of villain in 'em. The sheriff and the bad guy go out in a blaze of glory. How this one stays on the shelf at the local comic shack, I'll never know. ([nixcomics.com](http://nixcomics.com))

—Gary Hornberger



**“A local Republican’s float passed by and they handed us a few more free beers. HUH.”**

## Freddy Smiles from Above

It was about ten years ago in this publication that I spoke of the late, great Freddy K, the Door County Polka King. He was an eccentric character in these parts, a true Wisconsinite. Freddy was a simple and honest potato farmer who handcrafted his own potato crates. Freddy would arrive at local events with his stereo blaring polka music while playing along with the music on his various odd musical noise makers. Freddy’s tractor was usually seen parked in front of the AC Tap, a rural tavern nearest his trailer home. Freddy once rigged his record player to work on his tractor battery so he could drive his tractor to and from the tavern while playing polka records, the needle bouncing around with each joyous bump.

Freddy, while in polka mode, would sometimes wear his own homemade blue cape and crown. Freddy was, after all, the Door County Polka King. I, of course, thought Freddy was the greatest, and was truly saddened by the news of his passing. At his funeral, they played “Roll Out the Barrel” when his casket was rolled down the aisle. Even from the afterlife, Freddy made people smile.

Let’s move ahead about ten years. It was Dollar Taco Night at Husby’s, a different local tavern which is run by Freddy’s much younger cousin, Chad. After acquiring a full belly of cheap taco goodness, I found myself sitting next to Chad. He bought me a couple beers and started telling me some very interesting news. He had gained access to the late, great Freddy’s tractor. This tractor *alone* is a much-recognized icon up here. When Freddy was around, most locals would see his tractor parked in front of the AC Tap and be comforted knowing this tourist mecca of the Midwest still had some Old World charm, still had a little spark of true rural reality.

Chad fed me a few more beers before hitting me up. I already knew what he was going to ask. Freddy K would usually get someone to drive his tractor so he could be pulled behind on a trailer with a large regal chair and his stereo. He would wear his cape and crown, blare his polka music, play his various noise makers along with the music, and accept all praise and adoration every year in the nearby Baileys Harbor Fourth of July parade. He was the highlight of the parade every year.

For almost ten years, he and his tractor were absent from the parade. Chad made his pitch. He wanted the Rhythm Chicken to

play on a trailer in this year’s parade while he pulled the trailer with his late cousin’s famous tractor. He felt it was the best way to pay tribute to such a great local legend. Seriously, how could I say no? A few more beers and then we shook on it. We were locked in.

On the morning of the Fourth I was to meet Chad on the outskirts of Baileys Harbor. I had my drums and gear in my car at our meeting place. I emptied a few cans of Hamm’s to get my patriotism all riled up. Chad had to drive Freddy’s tractor a good ten miles at a stunning pace of about four miles an hour. Needless to say, it took him a while. I waited and had more Hamm’s while the text updates came in: *I’m at the corner of F and Maple Grove. Passing by Nordahl’s farmhouse. I’m on the home stretch, almost there!* Then I saw a most glorious sight. For the first time in ten years, my eyes fell upon this legendary tractor as it rambled towards me, a smiling Chad at the wheel. My chariot had arrived!

I threw my drums and gear onto the trailer and climbed aboard. Chad even had two of Freddy’s old potato crates on board, both full of candy to toss to the kids. This was going to be great! Chad pulled me and my gear around town to the parade’s starting lineup area. With my phone I took a pic of the tractor from behind and sent it to my local friends commenting, “Getting pulled by Freddy K’s tractor! HOLY SHIT!” We passed a few other parade floats and random cars, many of them pointing to the famous tractor. Every now and then Chad would glance back at me. We both smiled, knowing the sheer greatness of what we were doing.

Once at the parade lineup area, we found a suitable spot and parked. I ran into the woods to release the used Hamm’s from my bladder then returned to the float to begin decorating. I had saved my empty Hamm’s cans—always good decorations for a Chicken float—and began taping them to the trailer while still emptying more. I put up a few posters I had created the day before. They said things like *Happy Chicken-dependence Day*, *Bardzo Goraco Kurczaka*, and, my favorite, *TYCO PDQ and POMF!* Only a few locals and New Jersey’s Ric Timmers would understand that one to mean *Take your clothes off, pretty darn quick, and piss on my face!* (It’s a long story) This parade was a wholesome family event, so I decided to go with the acronym for that one. The final Hamm’s cans were emptied and

taped to the float. I started my rehydration process while waiting for the parade to start, gulping down about one gallon of water. It was a hot day and I knew this water wouldn’t be peed out like the Hamm’s.

**Dinghole Report #127: Hot, Hot, Hotter than Hot Ruckus! (Rhythm Chicken sighting #.... pi times infinity plus four?)**

As you most likely have heard, this summer gave most of the country one hell of a heat wave. Even though Door County, being surrounded by Lake Michigan, has some of Mother Nature’s natural air conditioning, we were still roasting near ninety degrees and some dripping,, horrid humidity. I continued rehydrating right up to the parade starting point and then pulled on the head. Already I could hear people cheering in anticipation of the forthcoming ruckus. I hadn’t played the Chickenkit in quite a few months and was ready to unleash the chaos!

Chad inched us into the parade and I began the holy ritual. I pounded and pounded and pounded. The chickenhead rocked to and fro. The ears flippity-flopped this way and that. My ruckus rock made the trailer bounce and the whole scene was just electric!

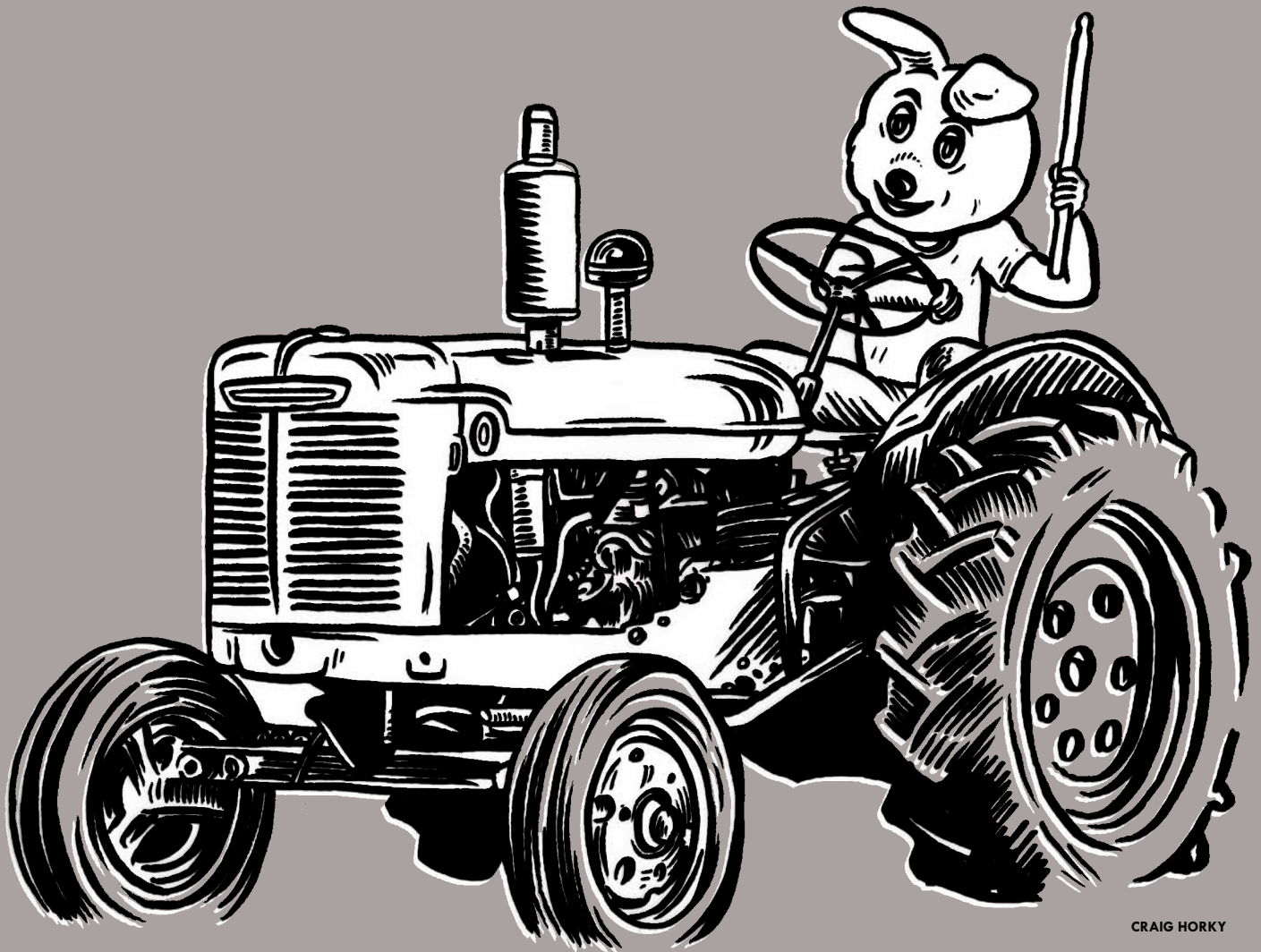
After a good nonstop dose of rhythm ruckus, I finally stopped and raised my wings skyward. The crowd cheered. I pulled the second gallon of water to my chicken lips and gulped madly before returning to the ruckus. So far, so good.

I performed a few more rounds of rumbling chaos between mad gulps from the water jug. Then I peeked out my eyeholes to find that we were still very much in the beginning of the parade route. Chad was laughing, throwing candy to kids, and proud as he could be to be driving his cousin’s famous tractor.

I was rocking my rock as usual and slowly becoming a throbbing, sweating, heaving, rockin’ mess of a chicken. Though my rhythm rock continued at an ever-rockin’ pace, I was feelin’ it. The sun beat down. There was no cooling wind off of Lake Michigan. The temperature was rising. The ruckus continued to explode from our float.

At various strategic points in the parade (like in front of the Blue Ox and the Cornerstone Pub), I would pull out my mega-huge drumsticks (the ruckus logs!) and give the kids my own little taste of Bun E. Carlos. The crowds ate it up! Each round of ruckus





CRAIG HORKY

**My hands were all blisters,  
all popped blisters.**

**Blood was dripping  
down my drumsticks.**

found me more and more beaten down, but my show continued undaunted! My hands were all blisters, all popped blisters. Blood was dripping down my drumsticks. I was short of breath and roasting in my chickenhead, *but the ruckus rocked on!* A few friends in the crowd towards the end of the parade later commented how they couldn't believe I was still rockin' so hard even at the very end of the parade. I see a half-assed Chicken gig as a sign of shame. This was Freddy's tractor. This was Freddy's parade. I owed it to him.

Finally, finally, *finally*, we reached the end of the route. Forty-five minutes of ruckus

rock on one *hell* of a hot, hot day! I pulled off the head and finished the second gallon of water. A local Republican representative's float passed by and they handed us a few more free beers. HUH.

Once back at my car, we pulled off the road and paid tribute to Freddy K, cheered our beers and knocked them back. I felt like I had been hit with a molten hot steamroller, but the cold beer did help a little bit. Chad, still smiling, said to me, "Rhythm Chicken, Freddy looked down and smiled, my friend. He's smiling up there today." Though I felt like complete and utter crap, I was smiling too.

Soon after returning to my soup bar, I vomited. I was nauseous. I was dizzy. I vomited again. My body was not right. For the next thirty-six hours I went through various stages of heat stroke. I drank two gallons of water before and during the parade. I didn't pee till later that evening. My hands took a good week to heal.

It was all worth it being pulled by Freddy K's tractor.

*This is my punk rock.*

—Rhythm Chicken

Rhythmchicken@hotmail.com

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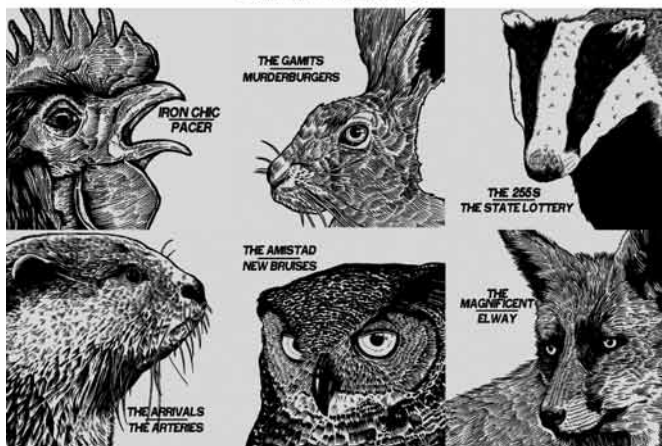
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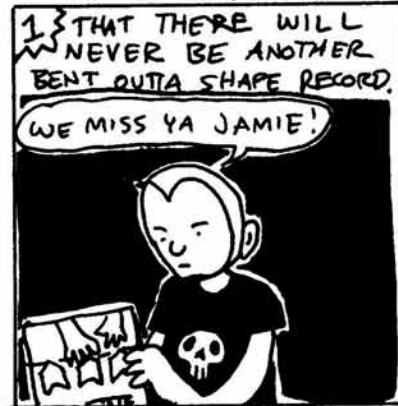
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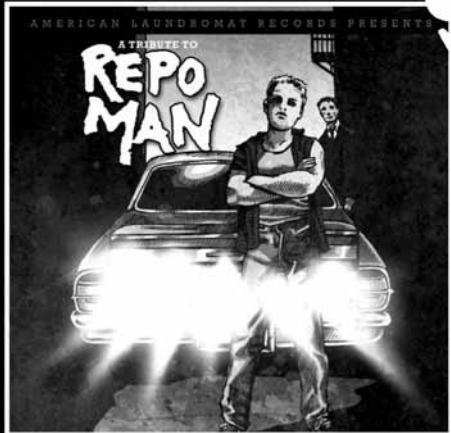
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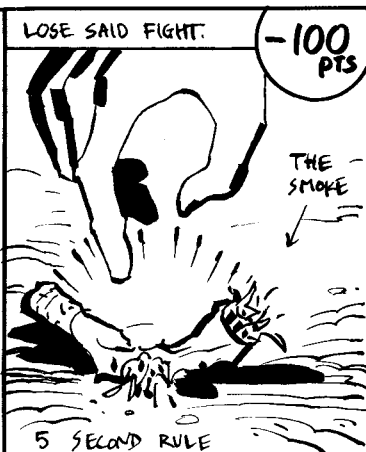
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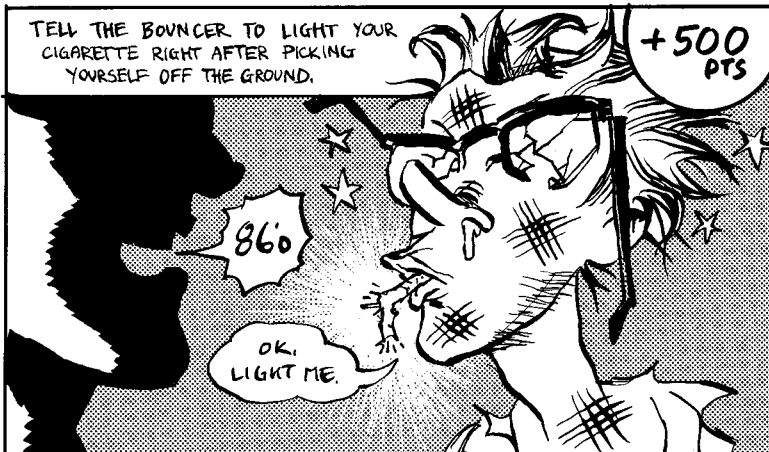
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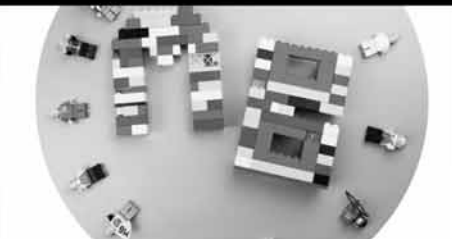




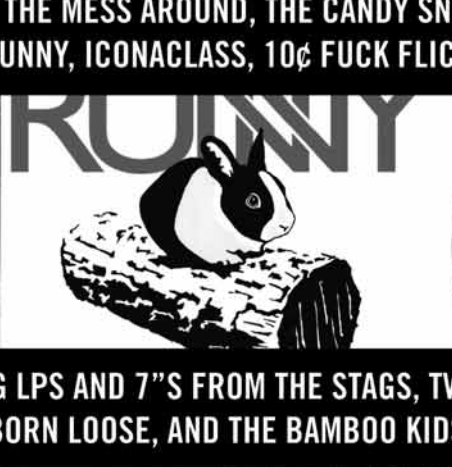




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HAVE WE MADE IT TOO EASY  
TO HURT AND KILL EACH  
OTHER? IS VIOLENCE SO  
COMMONPLACE THAT WE  
ONLY THINK ABOUT IT WHEN  
A CATASTROPHE HAPPENS?

ART

IS THERE A PART OF OUR  
MONKEY BRAINS THAT  
SNAPS BECAUSE WE DON'T  
HAVE TO KILL TO EAT AND  
SURVIVE, DAY IN AND DAY  
OUT?

IS OUR PRE-PACKAGED,  
PRE-FAB SOCIETY  
MAKING US MORE PRONE  
TO OUTBURSTS OF  
BEASTIAL MAYHEM AND  
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IN THIS AGE OF SOCIAL  
NETWORKING WHERE  
EVERYONE HAS 200+  
FACEBOOK FRIENDS, WHY  
ARE PEOPLE STILL SO  
LONELY AND ISOLATED?

I WISH EVERYONE  
WOULD REMEMBER  
THAT GUNS DON'T  
LOVE PEOPLE,  
PEOPLE LOVE  
PEOPLE.



DOOT  
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DOOT  
DOO...

DOOT  
DOO!

## WHO ARE YOU?

**"I grew up with roaches, rats, and mice, so I love them."**

# Nardwuar vs. Metta World Peace

## The Human Serviette

**Nardwuar:** Who are you?

**Metta World Peace:** Yes, I am Metta World Peace.

**Nardwuar:** Metta World Peace, welcome to Vancouver, British Columbia Canada.

**Metta:** Yes, thanks for having me. It is a great time.

**Nardwuar:** I love that you always rep Queensbridge.

**Metta:** Yeah, I love my neighbourhood, just being from somewhere and it shaping you, giving you that determination to make it to your goals, which is the NBA for me. I love Queensbridge.

**Nardwuar:** Now here you are in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, Surrey, and you might be missing Queensbridge a little, so I thought I would bring you a gift. *MC Shan - The Bridge*.

[Nardwuar hands Metta a record]

**Metta:** Are you serious?

**Nardwuar:** Yes, this is *MC Shan—The Bridge* and check what is on the other side.

**Metta:** Wow. Tragedy and Iman Thug. *The Bridge 2000*, and you have *MC Shan - The Bridge*. That is an amazing, amazing record right here. This is amazing.

**Nardwuar:** What can you tell the people about that?

**Metta:** It is just special. This right here is really special because I am from here. This is music from the '70s, I mean from the early '80s. It is where hip-hop was born, you know, in New York City, and it is amazing to have this in my hands right now.

**Nardwuar:** And you love Tragedy, don't you?

**Metta:** I love Tragedy. Tragedy is my favorite artist.

**Nardwuar:** Tragedy Khadafi, another gift for you.

[Nardwuar hands Metta a record]

**Metta:** Oh wow. This is amazing. I am a big fan. Tragedy is a rapper that nobody really knows because all his lyrics he actually was living. He did a lot of time, he did over, I think, seventeen years in jail combined. He's a really good artist. He's a real artist—if you want to hear somebody who really speaks what they're really living, Tragedy is probably your guy [laughs].

**Nardwuar:** It is somewhat confusing too, because there is Tragedy Khadafi—and also

another gift, lastly for you here Metta World Peace—*The Intelligent...*

[Nardwuar hands Metta a record]

**Metta:** *The Intelligent Hoodlum*.

**Nardwuar:** Who is?

**Metta:** Tragedy Khadafi. He started as—this is one of the most amazing interviews, this is a brilliant interview, a brilliant thing that you got going on here. It is amazing research, you know, that you have done. This is amazing to have this in your hands, vinyl, wax.

**Nardwuar:** *B-Ball's Best Kept Secret*, have you seen this at all? [Nardwuar hands Metta the record]

**Metta:** I heard of something like this, but I don't know who is on it.

**Nardwuar:** Like, check out who is on it. Jason Kidd, rapping!

**Metta:** It is amazing. I love it because I'm a big fan of all these guys.

**Nardwuar:** And Malik Sealy. You played with him at St. John's, rest in peace, right?

**Metta:** I played with Malik Sealy, he passed away. He played with the Timberwolves. He used to play at St. John's some of the time, recreational games when I was in college. So I am a big fan of Malik, rest in peace. All of these guys—Cedric Ceballos, Chris Mills, Jason Kidd, J.R. Rider, all these guys—I love it, I love it.

**Nardwuar:** Did you ever see Malik rap at all? Or, how about Dennis Scott?

**Metta:** I have never seen none of them rap. I didn't know Dennis Scott rapped, but it is amazing, like you know, Dana Barros.

**Nardwuar:** Gary Payton?

**Metta:** Gary Payton, Shaquille O'Neal. I really want to hear this. I just love my basketball players who rap. Love it.

**Nardwuar:** Now Dennis Scott played with the Vancouver Grizzlies.

**Metta:** Dennis Scott, yeah.

**Nardwuar:** And the other night you wore a Grizzlies jersey.

**Metta:** I had to put the Grizzlies jersey on. A lot of people took a little offense to it, but I am in Vancouver. First off, they don't have a team and if you come to Vancouver, you will hear that the fans, they miss their basketball a lot. And people don't understand it because they are not here. So that was one of the best gestures I can make, was to put on that Vancouver Grizzlies jersey.

**Nardwuar:** And what is really great is you like Vancouver. Some b-ballers didn't like Vancouver, like Steve Francis. He said the only good thing about Vancouver was it had cheap CDs.

**Metta:** Well, being from America, we don't really see Canada. And they don't promote Canada to us. On commercials, we see the Bahamas' water, Jamaican water. You might see Paris and Europe and things like that, but nobody understands that if you come to Canada you can get great times. I am not trying to promote Canada, I'm not getting paid for this, but I mean you can go to Hornby, you can go to Victoria, and a bunch of other places.

**Nardwuar:** How much business have you done over the years, in the showers?

**Metta:** Well, none.

**Nardwuar:** I thought you met Kobe in the showers and you told him to come to L.A.?

**Metta:** Oh yeah. Well, after game six in 2008 in Boston, L.A. Lakers lost, and I'm a big fan of Kobe, even though me and Kobe had a lot of wars against each other. So I was like—the game is over, he had just lost the finals, and I am like "Kobe." He turned around in the shower, and it was me, and I am like, "Yo, good game man. Hopefully I will play with you one day."

**Nardwuar:** How did you get in the shower? What is the trick for getting in the shower with Kobe at the end of a game?

**Metta:** They let me back, and then...

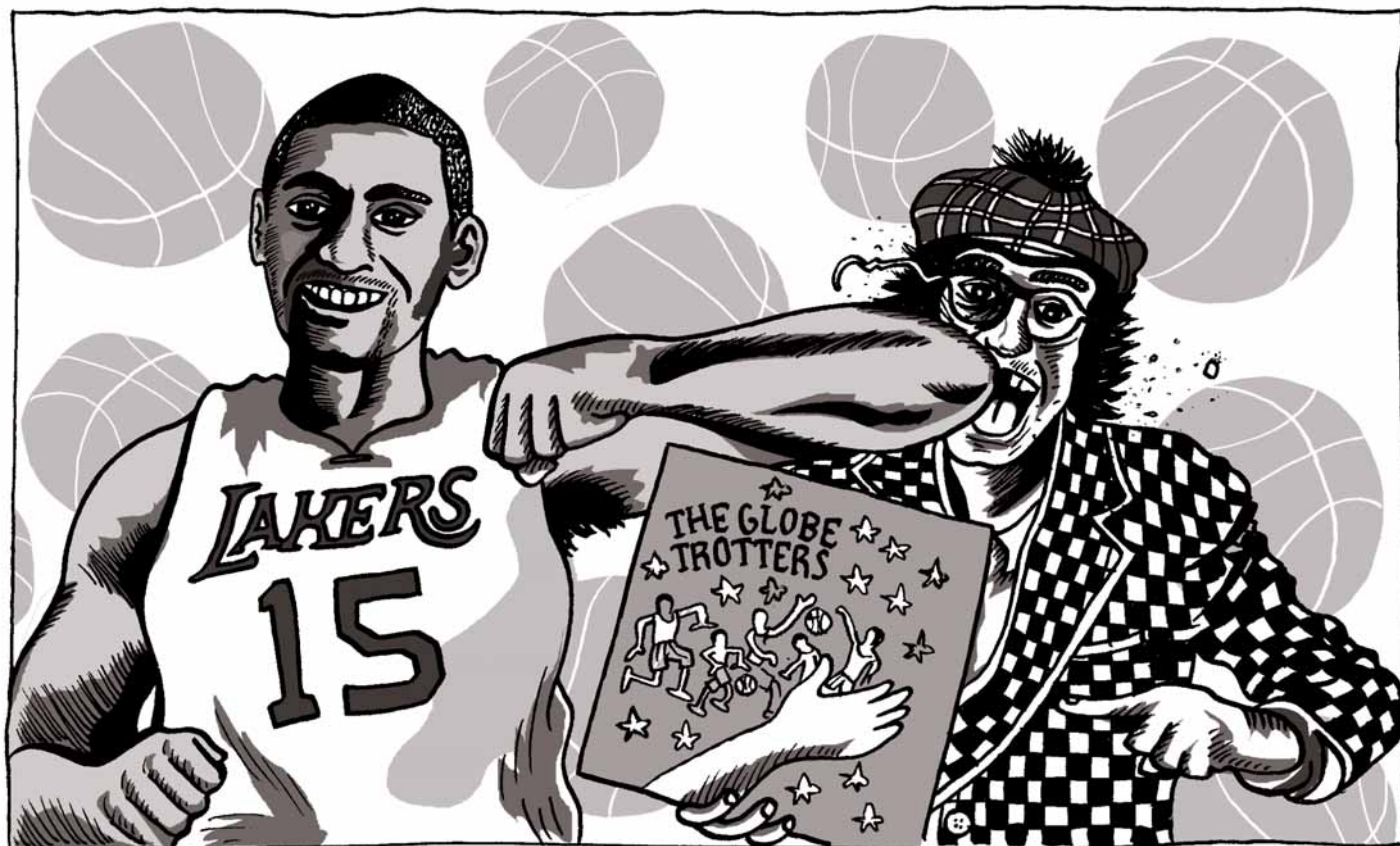
**Nardwuar:** You weren't even playing though?

**Metta:** I wasn't playing. I had a Sacramento Kings jersey on, representing Sacramento Kings, because that is who I was playing for, and I love The Maloofs and then Phil Jackson was there, and Brian Shaw was there, and I asked them, "Where's Kobe at? I wanted to tell him good game because I'm a huge fan." I'm a huge fan of all these guys.

**Nardwuar:** Kobe and Tyra Banks. You are talking about meeting Kobe in the shower. What about meeting Kobe in a recording studio? [Nardwuar hands Metta a Kobe and Tyra Banks record]

**Metta:** I love it. I love it, Kobe Bryant. He is—I actually think Kobe Bryant is a pretty good rapper. What happens when athletes have rapped, you know, we pretty much stop because there is no market for it yet. So I am





BILL PINKEL

## Metta: I love Tragedy. Tragedy is my favorite artist.

one of the few to continue to go. Shaq, you know, I am one of the few to continue to go.

**Nardwuar:** Yeah, I was going to ask you about that. Iverson as well. What do you think about Iverson's rappin', "40 Bars"?

[Nardwuar hands Metta an Iverson record]

**Metta:** "40 Bars" is one of the best tracks of that year. It was hard. People respect Iverson for that. It was an amazing track. I mean, he was speaking from his heart and it was, wow, it was one of the best songs that I heard.

**Nardwuar:** Metta World Peace, what do you think about Shaq's catalogue here? I have a few Shaq records.

[Nardwuar hands Metta a bunch of Shaq records]

**Metta:** This is what it is right here. This is what it is right here.

**Nardwuar:** What can you tell the people about these releases?

**Metta:** "You Can't Stop the Reign," that track is amazing. People need to hear that track. People probably have not heard that in a long time. "You Can't Stop the Reign," big hit. This record, the Fu-Schnickens was dope. I like it. He looks swagged out on the cover too, so that was pretty cool.

**Nardwuar:** [Looking at Shaq's swagged-out pants] I love the pants. Pretty amazing, eh?

**Metta:** I like Shaq. Yeah, the pants is pretty cool. I like Shaq's solos more than him with the Fu-Schnickens, even though they helped him a lot. That was a major plus for him.

**Nardwuar:** Ron Artest, Metta World Peace, thanks very much, really appreciate your time. I was lastly wondering, roaches, are they still your friends?

**Metta:** Yes, I love roaches. Roaches are my friends. They are not everybody's friends. I grew up with roaches, rats, and mice, so I love them.

**Nardwuar:** So you would never really eat a roach, would you?

**Metta:** No, I wouldn't eat it, because that is my people. We is peoples, so I can't eat my peoples, you know?

**Nardwuar:** And that is what I was thinking, you won't eat a roach, but you love food. So I thought I would give you some salt and vinegar crickets and some barbecue worms.

[Nardwuar gives Metta World Peace two boxed packages]

**Metta:** Wow.

**Nardwuar:** Only nine calories.

**Metta:** Wow.

**Nardwuar:** Would those meet your diet?

**Metta:** Wow. Oh wow. Oh wow [laughs]. Oh wow, I want to eat this. I can't eat this. No, not at all.

**Nardwuar:** Salt and vinegar crickets.

**Metta:** Oh wow, where did you get this from?

**Nardwuar:** Especially for you.

**Metta:** Thank you, I appreciate it.

**Nardwuar:** Well Metta World Peace, anything else you want to add to the people out there at all?

**Metta:** Definitely follow RonArtest.com, and we are going to keep you updated. And this is a great interview, very unique, and I think we need more like this.

**Nardwuar:** Well, thanks very much Ron. Keep on rocking in the free world, and doot doola doot doo...

**Metta:** You.

**Nardwuar:** Almost. Doot doola doot doo...

**Metta:** Doot doo.

To see this interview hop to [www.nardwuar.com](http://www.nardwuar.com)



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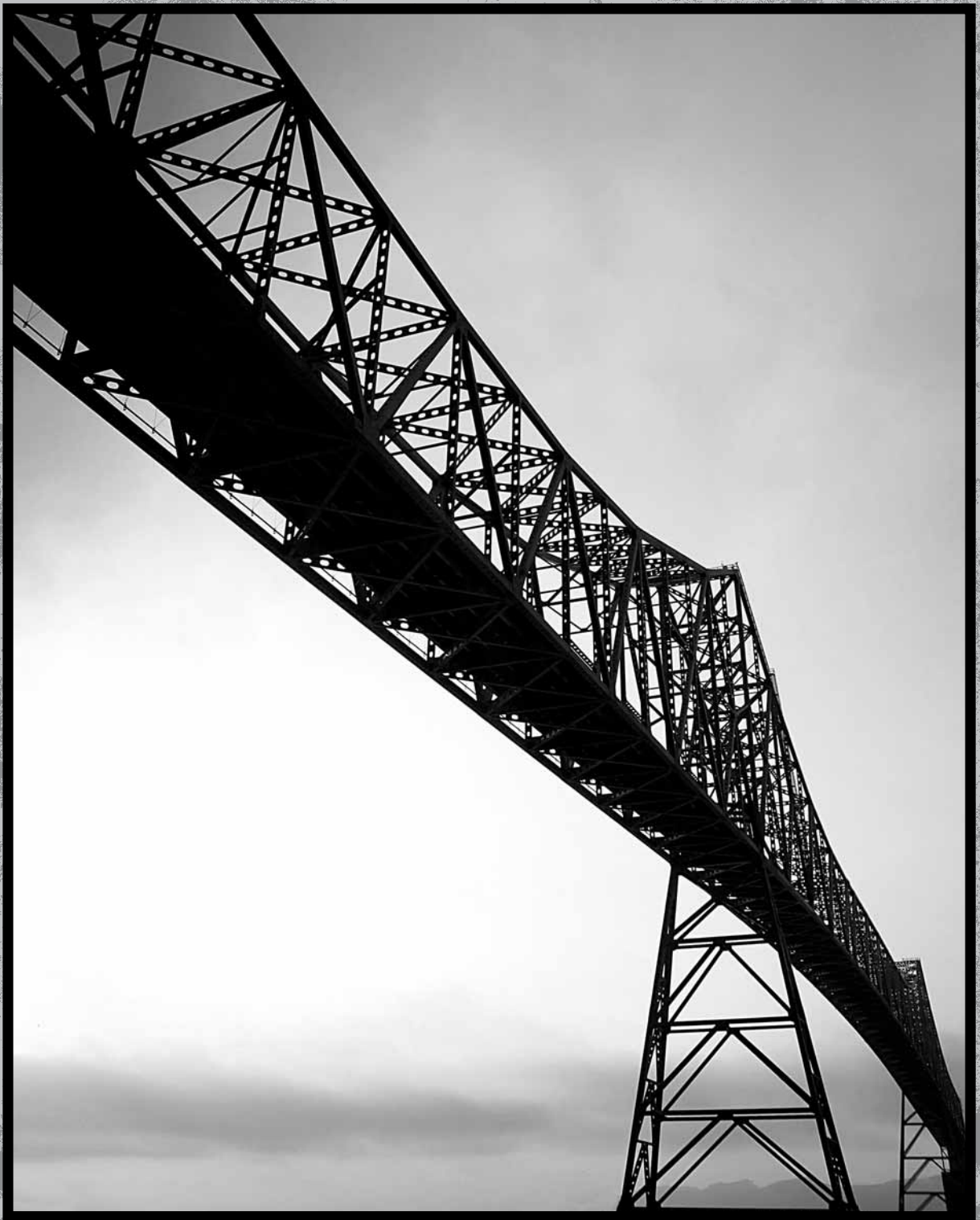
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## **Rachel Murray Framingheddu's Photo Page**

Astoria-Megler Bridge in Astoria, Oregon







# BIG EYES

Interview by Taiga Dinger and Felix Reyes

Photos by Patrick Houdek and Shanty Cheryl

Layout by Lauren Measure

Interview was done at a house that Kate was house sitting right before a Big Eyes/Sourpatch show and Big Crux/Unnatural Helpers show.

**BIG EYES** are a power pop/punk trio consisting of two Jersey natives and a Reno sweet talker. The members call Seattle their home, when they're not away on a six-week U.S. tour. Big Eyes vocalist and guitarist Kate Eldridge sings with a youthful, anthemic voice, which fits perfectly with her gritty guitar leads. That's accompanied by bass player Chris Costalupes' melodic bass lines. Drummer C.J. Frederick restrains his expertise by not overpowering the songs with fills, but lets the melody cut through his hard-hitting rhythm. Big Eyes recently put out a 7" single on Grave Mistake Records demonstrating how natural they are at writing pop songs that make you flip the record over and over.



PATRICK HOUDECK

**Felix:** You guys are on the road for crazy lengths at a time. I admire it because you are putting in lots of hard work, and I personally wish I had the ability to do that. How do you guys keep it up, and stay motivated?

**Chris:** It's a pretty big compromise and a lot of hustle. The first few months of living in Washington, none of us had a job or a place to live. We would all couch surf and work odd jobs. We also all got food stamps, which definitely helped us on tour. It was also easy to be on tour because we didn't have a settled home life and we didn't have anything to look forward to when we got back home. We usually end up camping and taking our time coming home from tour.

**Kate:** One time we added a bunch of shows on our way back and stayed in Portland an extra night so we could play another show.

**Taiga:** How did you end up working with Grave Mistake? They commonly release

hardcore bands on that label. It seemed a little unusual they released a record for Big Eyes.

**C.J.:** We were in Portland and my friend Ryan from Night Birds called me. He asked if we would ever be interested in doing a record on Grave Mistake. I said, "Well, yeah," and Ryan tells me that Alex kept talking about Big Eyes and was too nervous to ask us. Working with Grave Mistake was something that never even crossed my mind. It was something we never even thought about, but after Ryan brought it up, it made perfect sense to all of us.

**Taiga:** Were you guys pretty good friends with Alex when you and Kate were living on the East coast?

**Kate:** Not really. We just knew him from shows, and his bands. He's a super nice,

awkward, funny guy. The first email we ever got from him was "Do you like me, or like like me?"

**Chris:** We ended up like liking him and he did a 7" for us.

**Taiga:** Chris, your old band was bit more abrasive and dissonant than Big Eyes. Was it difficult for you to play something completely different?

**Chris:** No. I always listened to rock'n'roll and punk, but I really don't listen to too much hardcore on the road anymore.

**C.J.:** But do you ever miss playing it?

**Chris:** Oh yeah, totally.

**C.J.:** When I look back on all the hardcore bands I use to be in, I remember how awesome of a time it was.

**Chris:** Yeah me too, but I don't think I play differently when I play in Big Eyes. I still put all my energy and focus into the music when





# When I look back on all the hardcore bands I use to be in, I remember how awesome of a time it was.

we play, just as much as I did with my old band. I always break a sweat.

**Taiga:** The last tour Big Eyes went on, you had a fill-in drummer because of C.J.'s back problems. What were the details on that?

**C.J.:** I'm not sure what happened. I just had a herniated disc one day. I think it had to do with all the stress and lifestyle that came with touring, but I think it would have happened anyway.

**Chris:** Yeah, you had a terrible streak of bad luck. What all happened?

**C.J.:** I had a shitty time for a while. All the shittiness in my life stopped like three weeks ago. On the last tour, I found out I had eczema. At first I thought I had scabies. We were driving in the middle of the night and my body felt like it was on fire. I couldn't stop scratching and itching myself. I couldn't handle it anymore and told them to take me to a hospital right away.

**Kate:** Eczema isn't that huge of a deal.

**C.J.:** Yeah, but it sucked, and I discovered I had it in the middle of a tour in the hot southern climate.

**Chris:** Yeah, it was right before our New Orleans show. C.J. started doing laundry at this house, and we get a call from the promoter who was doing our show. He told us we had to come to the show by 3:00PM. There was going to be a huge parade, and if we didn't cross the bridge by then, we wouldn't be able to get in town at all. We had to rush and leave right away, and C.J. threw his wet clothes into a garbage bag, so we could get there on time.

**C.J.:** Yeah, I spent a long time in a laundromat in New Orleans, which had a full bar.

**Taiga:** A bar in a laundromat?

**Chris:** That laundromat was pretty cool. They had a kitchen, bar, and a pool table.

**C.J.:** Then I got in a car accident right when I got back from tour.

[Kate rummages through the cupboards and pulls out a bottle.]

**C.J.:** Is that vodka?

**Kate:** No, it's gin.

[Drinking and babbling commences.]

**Taiga:** Okay, so C.J. got a herniated disc, eczema, got in a car wreck, and had to go back to the East Coast to get surgery. This resulted in Big Eyes having to find a fill-in drummer, right?

**Chris:** Yeah, Amos Pitsch. We didn't have a drummer or a vehicle.

**Kate:** We met up with Amos in Fargo, North Dakota. He was on tour with Paul Collins and Peter Case and ended up in Fargo on the end of their tour. He learned our set in two days and agreed to do the tour with us. He knew all the songs right away. It was insane.

**Chris:** Then I called my friend Josh in Reno and asked if we could borrow his van for six weeks and he said, "Yeah sure. Why not?"

**C.J.:** Amos was the only person we even thought about asking.

**Kate:** I thought he would be really busy with his other band Tenement, who just did like two LPs in six months. I figured I might as

well call him and just ask, and he ended up having some time after his tour. I was a little nervous to ask him, but I figured we had nothing to lose at that point.

**Kate:** We're also a band that tries to be loyal with each of the band members. We definitely all agreed to get a fill-in drummer for this tour.

**Chris:** Yeah, I'm like the fifth bass player, though. The first time I met C.J. and Kate, I was trying to be in their band.

**C.J.:** Yeah, it really freaked me out at the time.

**Chris:** Hey, I was new to town and really wanted to start a band.

**Kate:** The first time I ever met Chris, he came over to my house and asked to play bass in Big Eyes.

**Taiga:** So after coming back from your long, lengthy tours, how do you feel inspired to write new material and practice?

**Chris:** After our first tour we came back and we were in such good spirits. All we wanted to do was to practice and record.

**Kate:** Then on our second tour we came back in a completely different mood.

**Chris:** I had a breakdown because I was back in Seattle with no money, no place to live, and I really had to get my life situated. I just wanted to shut myself from everyone and everything.

**C.J.:** This was just only an hour of being in Seattle, too.

**Kate:** Once we got more situated with our lives in Seattle, we all had separate time with our lives and the band. It became easier to just focus on writing new songs when things were more solid.

**Taiga:** I believe there's a pinnacle moment in someone's life where they realize they want to be involved in punk, start a band, and go on tour. When was your self-discovery?

**C.J.:** There was a band from my hometown called Felix Frump, and I grew up thinking all I ever want to do is play with this band. They kind of had a Hüsker Dü vibe going on, but they were the first band I remember really being obsessed with and looking up to. I solely started a band just in hopes that one



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PATRICK HOUDECK

The first email we ever  
got from him was  
"Do you like me,  
or like like me?"

day I could play a show with Felix Frump and thought nothing passed that. But I never got a chance to play with them.

**Kate:** So your life has no purpose?

**C.J.:** Yeah, I've just been floating my whole life with no purpose. I'm like that feather in Forrest Gump.

**Kate:** When I was little, I had this obsession with vans. I would just always draw them and think they were the coolest things ever. One of my first friends eventually got one. I always loved driving around with her and going on trips. I just remember being in her van, looking around inside, and thinking how awesome it was. When I finally started a band that toured, I was really comfortable being away and being stuck in a van. It's something I always really wanted to do.

Also, when I was twelve years old, I got my first guitar. I immediately went to my cousin who had a drum set and bothered him every day to play music with me. I remember he was just really confused and thought there was no purpose in playing with me. I think he mostly played because he had to play something in school. I would run into his room after school and ask him to play, but he would always seem like it was a chore. By ninth grade, I started my first band and we practiced every day after school. That's all I ever wanted to do. I would just spend my entire day in my room playing guitar and Zelda and talking to my friend from guitar camp.

**Chris:** I first started going to shows in Reno and remember seeing all these great bands, like Disconnect and Bafabegiya. Eventually, I became friends with some of them and never thought that one day I would be in a band with them. That's when I started Over Vert. If it weren't for those bands and those people, I would have no clue what I would



SHANTY CHERYL

be doing. When I was in high school, I would come up and visit Washington and always wanted to live up here. If high school Chris saw everything I was doing now, he would be super stoked.

**Felix:** So what do you guys got coming up as band?

**Kate:** We're going down to Reno to play Outsleazed Fest, then playing Awesome Fest at the end of August, and The Fest in Gainesville in October.

**Chris:** Yeah, Outsleazed Fest is wild. We are scheduled to play at like 4:00 AM. All the bands will be playing super late and everyone just parties until the sun comes up.

**Felix:** So Chris, I had a crazy dream about you.

**Kate:** Was it a sexy dream?

**Felix:** Unfortunately, no. But let me describe it to you. It was a high desert and it's almost

dusk. I was staring off into the desert and I felt you standing close to me. You end up walking away and a few seconds later a unicorn walks up to me...

[Laughter]

**Felix:** The unicorn starts sniffing my leg and I begin to push him away, but he decides to bite me in the ass. I felt the sensation of pain and immediately woke up. I just want to know—what were you doing in my dream? [Chris pulls out his car keys with a unicorn ornament dangling from it.]



# Wreck of the Zephyr

Noah Wolf—Guitar, vocals  
Eric Gosselin—Bass, vocals  
Dave Paige—Drums, vocals



Transcription by Samantha Beerhouse, Josh Rosa, and Matthew Hart  
Interview by Todd Taylor and Daryl Gussin / Layout by Daryl / Illos by Marcos Siref  
Photos by Jessica Gosselin, Beth Dazet, Allison McElDoon, and Michael Douchette



JESSICA GOSSSELIN

This sounds hokey. A trio of friends who enjoy one another's company move from Boston to Los Angeles. Two go into television and film. The third becomes a cook and opens a DIY venue in Northeast L.A. for exactly one day less than a year. The three play music because they can't stop. Arty music pretensions fade. Folksiness is amplified; stomping resumes. A homosexual yeti movie gets made. On-set intestines are perfected, made vegetarian, get pecked at by pigeons. Domestic dogs develop a taste for human flesh. ZZZzzzrrrrt. What?

Wreck Of The Zephyr is a great example of organic, practical accidentalism. They're a triangular peg of a righteous-yet-humble band, not quite fitting into the round holes of pre-existing punk scenes. Punks label them as "alternative" and have encouraged them to play with Christian bands. Indie folks shy away from their volume and speed.

That suits me just fine because it's often hard to shake the feeling that round-hole, DIY punk can be a beer-soaked failure. That it can be a folly, a reenactment. That it's often childish and petty and the dialogues don't progress; they just endlessly cycle like turbulent waters without forward motion. I need to hear and see bands like Wreck Of The Zephyr that reshape possibilities. Bands of friendly folks that have no interest in fitting in. Bands that create their own language. Bands with a drummer who pulls out his shoulder air drumming in the van to his old band's songs.

Wreck Of The Zephyr's first LP, *For Helen*, is available as a personally handmade hardbound volume: vinyl, fully illustrated 12"x12" book, and handwritten download code. The time and effort that went into making it is ridiculous. It's priced below cost. It's money-stupid, brilliant, awesome, and quixotic.

Wreck Of The Zephyr's an affirmation.

They leave me with the hard-to-shake feeling that punk can still save those who invest themselves in it, even if sounds hokey when you try to explain it.





BETH DAZET



## I have strong ideas but they're mainly about being confused.

**Todd:** So you guys know each other not from Los Angeles, but prior?

**Noah:** Yes, we met in Boston, while going to school at Emerson College. They had met, barely, previous to college.

**Eric:** Dave and I had met the summer before college at a show and stayed in contact throughout that summer, got together once we got to college, and then formed a band shortly thereafter.

**Todd:** What was Emerson College's first name?

**Eric:** Ooh, good question! I know it was an all-girls school at one point. It was—oh crap, I don't remember. Anybody?

**Dave:** I didn't even know it had a first name. I just knew it by its last name.

**Todd:** It was formed by a guy named Charles Emerson. It was originally called

the Boston Conservancy of Elocution, Oration, and Dramatic Art.

**Noah:** You don't say! [laughter] Well, our elocution is still...top notch.

**Dave:** I minored in elocution.

**Todd:** This is L.A., not Boston—what brought you guys out here?

**Dave:** I work in the film industry. Eric works in television. Noah pretty much came to hang out.

**Noah:** I came out because of them. I was studying audio recording, so I came out being like, "Oh, I'm gonna get into the sound engineering world." But then I realized that most of the work in the sound engineering world is in post-production, doing commercials, or at best, big recording studios, where you have to do these really demeaning internships—which is fine if the

ultimate goal in your life is work at a big-time recording studio. Then it kind of makes sense. I did some work—commercial stuff—and, to me, it does not fall philosophically in line with who I am and made me really depressed. And then when that fell through, I just started cooking, basically.

**Todd:** Had you been cooking before?

**Noah:** I had been cooking a little bit, but it was definitely really informal.

**Dave:** We all lived in a huge house in Boston together and Noah was the unofficial chef.

**Eric:** He would always make fried chicken.

**Dave:** This was his pre-veg years.

**Todd:** And this is the place where you would get down to your shorts and jump into snow piles from the actual house? Second story? [Chorus of yeses.]

**Dave:** That's the place.



**Eric:** Prat House? Rat House? There's a pair. Noah and I have "Prat-Rat" tattoos—one of three people who have them. We were all supposed to get them.

**Noah:** We got them on a road trip, out from Boston to L.A., actually. We stopped in Austin and we thought how getting a tattoo can be one of the more fun things you can do in a town because it's a permanent marker of having been at that place. It seems like a moment with friends that you can share, that doesn't go away. You can spend fifty dollars on beer in a bar really easily and it's gone really quickly, too. But you get a little tattoo, it's there forever. There are pluses and minuses of that whole situation.

**Eric:** Then by the time we got to L.A., I was two hundred dollars overdrawn in my checking account because of that tattoo, specifically.

**Noah:** We were very poor.

**Todd:** Well, it's better than getting commemorative soup spoons.

**Noah:** Yes, it's true—unless you are a spoon collector.

**Dave:** Soup's pretty cool. Soup spoon tattoos are the best, though.

**Todd:** So you guys have been in a bunch of bands together. The one that I am most familiar with is Hundreds And Thousands.

**Eric:** Dave and I were in a band called V-1 Irrational in Boston; we were just kind of a noise rock band.

**Dave:** We were very pretentious. It was the archetypal college. Listening to it now, you think, "It's like a good part," but the rest of it is just...

**Eric:** It's painful.

**Noah:** They had a song, which I actually liked, which was basically them imitating whale songs.

**Eric:** It's called "Whale Songs." We would wear black and white masks on stage and always wear the same thing.

**Dave:** We were in film school, though, so it's forgivable.

**Todd:** So then what's the genesis for *Wreck Of The Zephyr*? What changed, because I don't think of it as pretentious noise rock or surfy.

**Dave:** *Wreck Of The Zephyr* began as Noah's side project from Hundreds And Thousands. It was almost like folk, in a way.

**Noah:** Yeah, a little bit. It started out as super simple folk songs with a little bit of what my friend called "Pralt country," short for "Prog-alternative country."

**Todd:** Fuck that.

**Noah:** That's what he said. So anyway, it was acoustic guitar and vocals, essentially folk punk but a little bit more weird than that. And then I started playing my acoustic guitar through all the amplifiers that I had. So then it was loud folk punk or whatever.

**Dave:** And I would play drums. Maybe three times a year we'd play a show and I just fill in. It'd be like a little oasis from the noise of Hundreds And Thousands. I'd come tap along pretty simple beats. Then Hundreds And Thousands disbanded. Noah and I—we had no outlet for our

aggressive energy. So, slowly, the music got louder and a little crazier.

**Noah:** Two things happened: I was writing on an acoustic guitar, which just changed how you write music, and I was writing alone. And then I moved to writing on an electric guitar. I was using a pickup and just beating the pickup into my guitar each time I played.

**Todd:** Which amplifies things.

**Noah:** Which amplifies things. I would write at home, acoustically, so it was a lot more open chords. I dunno, it's just different. There's a singer-songwriter aspect to it that kind of comes in naturally, even if you try to avoid it.

**Dave:** So then we were a two-piece, for six months or something. We'd go out and play these shows, but we missed the bass. Over time, it was fun and it was very easy to coordinate band practices because it was just two of us.

**Noah:** I think we liked the idea...

**Dave:** ...dreaming of more low end. We needed it.

**Eric:** At one point, I got really envious that all of my friends were in bands. After I left Hundreds And Thousands, they got really awesome and I was, "Aw, man. I missed the boat." Then I started seeing these two play alone and thought, "Aw man, these guys are really good too! What the hell?" So then I was like, "I'll play bass for you guys if you want."

**Dave:** We let him back. Just don't leave this time.

**Noah:** I really liked the idea of the stripped-down, two piece. Super intimate, just the two of us. But it's one of those things where you do it for awhile, then you start saying, "Why would you ever not want to have bass?" There are a few bands that do well without it. I'm not saying that there aren't exceptions that prove the rule. But, in general, why don't you want that part of the sonic spectrum? It just seems ridiculous. It seems like it's what holds everything down, adds this depth to it.

So when he offered—he's a really good bass player and has a really good sense of melody—and I know him. It's so hard to be in a band with people you don't know, for me. I can't move into an apartment with someone I don't know either. I'm very sensitive.

**Todd:** So what's the meaning of *Wreck Of The Zephyr*? It's a children's book. Your first full length vinyl album, *For Helen*, looks like a children's book. What's the reasoning behind that?

**Noah:** The name came originally when I was trying really hard to come up with a name, back in Boston. I had already started going by it.

**Todd:** Were you familiar with the book?

**Noah:** Yes, it is named after that book. I grew up reading a lot of Chris Van Allsburg and some other illustrated children's book artists. I always really liked that genre of writing because I feel that there is a lot of opportunity to read between the lines. A good children's book author leaves a lot of space for interpretation, which I think Chris Van

Allsburg always does; I think that book does. There's something nostalgic about it. It's all told through memories. It is really simple and there's a naïveté to it, but, at the same time, it's kind of dark and confusing and about questioning your place, who you are, why you do what you do. When it's appropriate to go for something really hard versus when you are just driven by hubris. It seemed like there was a lot of opportunity for question.

**Todd:** That actually ties into something Eric had said, but it was about film. He said that, "I love it when what you don't see is just as important as what you are given to focus on."

**Eric:** I said that?

**Todd:** Yeah!

**Eric:** Oh, wow. Well, I definitely feel that way. I also think the inspiration of *Wreck Of The Zephyr*—the book compared to the band—it all rings true. Noah's lyrics are oftentimes pretty dark, but also come from a more innocent point of view. Am I wrong?

**Noah:** That's fair.

**Dave:** Yes. A good example of that was when we were recording *For Helen*. There's a song we have, "Rhythm in My Bones," which I always thought was kind of a happy love song. And I remember listening to Noah recording the vocal tracks for that, and thinking, "This is kind of sweet. It's about a girl and love lost." Then Noah came into the room three minutes later. The engineer, Erik, asked us, and Noah says, "It's supposed to be two prisoners in Guantanamo Bay having this discussion in their cells," and I just go, "What?" There's a lot of that.

**Eric:** But I really like that. I like things that are open to interpretation. I like that you bring yourself to it and can take whatever meaning you want from it.

**Todd:** That is where symbolism and allegory work, especially in song. I think a band like Fugazi comes right to mind. They set up the image and what you take away from it is perfectly legitimate. Unless it's racist. [laughter]

**Noah:** I like giving people the opportunity to interpret for themselves. I want to create images that are vivid. I want to create music that is vivid. And powerful. And all of us on just a purely physical level like to play loud. We like to play fast. I can't do anything that's not fast, I've tried really hard.

**Todd:** Don't.

**Noah:** Tried to slow down, just because you want to try something different.

**Todd:** You can be seventy one day, just wait.

**Noah:** Exactly.

**Daryl:** You guys self-released your LP. Have your thoughts changed on self-releasing records since that process?

**Noah:** When I did my first zine I did it out of homemade paper because I wanted to get out of the idea that a zine is just photocopied. And you guys do a really good job of that. We can have a zine and it doesn't have to be just photocopied paper stapled together, you know? We can put care into it. You can care about what you do and still be a punk.



MICHAEL DOUCETTE

**I have a really hard time defining something too precisely because I just don't think there is one simple answer to anything.**

And so because of that, when I was doing this record, we're like, "Well what are we going to do with it to make it interesting?" The name of the band is named after a children's book. And even more than that it, the record is named after my friend's first child. It was the first time someone I was really close to had a child.

And that's just an incredible moment. So the record is named after this girl. I called it *For Helen* also just because I thought it was funny, too, because no one will know what this is about. "It's probably about some girl or something," you know what I mean? It is about some girl! Some little tiny, tiny girl.

I thought it would be interesting to do a hand-bound book for it, and do an illustrated

book, like a children's book. I also like the idea of artist telephone, as I call it. For instance, I gave the lyrics and the rough mixes of the album to this woman who's an illustrator in Germany I met through friends and just said, "Take what you think of it. I've put my stamp on it, we wrote the songs. We made the music. But now tell us what you think of it." I like the idea of people reimagining ideas into what they think it is. She sent us the things so that we could look at them, we didn't have to make many changes.

**Todd:** She's making proofs, at least.

**Noah:** Right. It has been incredibly expensive and I've spent hundreds and hundreds of hours putting these things together. And I still have many more to do. It's difficult and

frustrating at times. It's something that's good about me, in a way, but also probably my biggest flaw is that I take on projects that are way. . .

**Todd:** Ambitious?

**Noah:** Very ambitious, to say the least. And with skill sets I have no idea about usually going into. [Laughs] I'm not actually a good visual artist. So making these books was difficult. I thought I actually had a pretty decent hand at it compared to some of my friends who helped me who also aren't artists.

I'm charging an amount for them right now that is essentially a loss. My idea is that I'll make it up by some people buying digital copies. It does make it more expensive and

it does freak some punks out. I have a friend who was like, "I don't know, man. I think you could have just taken a gatefold and put this stuff in and it would have saved you a lot of money." I totally get where he's coming from but that's not the idea at all really.

I think I like to battle for things. I like to do things where it might get fucked up, where I'm going to have to learn something new.

**Todd:** And that's where I think that punk rock really gives us a lot of leeway. We can do this and we're actively thinking about the reading of something.

**Noah:** And you have the right because it's yours to do whatever you want with it. And that's the whole point of punk is to take control. Take control of your life.

**Todd:** We are our own masters of this.

**Noah:** To finish that question though, I mean the next record we do I want to do something super unique and... minimalist.

[Big laughs]

**Noah:** That doesn't mean I'll never do something crazy and extravagant again. There's always that weird, embarrassed punk inside of you. Everyone's like, "So how much did you spend on this?" And you're like (whispering), "10,000 dollars." Or whatever it is.

[Laughs] The thing is, for instance, I got off work at like three in the morning one day, took that day off. Then I got up the next day and worked seven days in a row, had one day off.

And right now, I'm in a stretch following that of working thirteen days in a row. But I do that because the system we work in right now is based on money. One way for me to get the things done that I want to do is being able to afford to go into the studio when I want to. I'm broke all the time. Money is meaningless to me but some of the things it affords me mean a lot to me.

**Todd:** Absolutely.

**Noah:** Sometimes it's being able to buy someone a drink and sometimes it's being able to put out a record. It allows me independence.

**Todd:** Or going on tour.

**Noah:** I don't have to wait for any one else to put out this record for me. We are our own label. We are our own masters or whatever. We can make our own decisions. That's important. That's why we all work really hard, is to be able to do the things we want to do. Dave and Eric put a lot of the money they make into making movies. I think everyone knows making movies is insanely expensive.

Nowadays, a million dollars is a super low budget movie, which is crazy.

Our record label is called Pass The Fist records. The name of that record label basically sums up, I think, myself ideologically. It's supposed to be this play on words between pacifist and Pass the Fist.

**Daryl:** Oooooooh! [Laughs]

**Noah:** Obviously, obviously. The point of it being, when it originally came about, the dilemma to myself—I was going through this whole thing of do we need to have an armed rebellion to change the world or is a pacifist struggle the way to go? I ended up falling towards the pacifist way because I think when you have a violent rebellion you can't have a non-violent world that follows it. How you make change imbues that sensibility into the change itself. The idea of confusion within one's self. I think so much music, writing, and art is often about, "This is what it is! This is the way it is. These are my really, really strong ideas." I have strong ideas but they're mainly about being confused. [Laughs]

**Noah:** Anyways, the two ideas behind the label. One of the ideas is that if we can do it ourselves, maybe other people will want to do it themselves, too. As a vegetarian, for instance, I never ask anyone else to

MICHAEL DOUCHETTE







ALLISON MCELDOON

**Not that I'm some great fountain of advice,  
but I like to listen to people and be a sounding board.  
Definitely a lot of sound. And a lot of people being bored.**

be a vegetarian. I'll cook meat for my friends, but I'm not going to eat meat. I think it does help. I'm not the Pied Piper of vegetarianism. I think that's the best way to make change, because otherwise you just piss people off anyway.

**Todd:** Leading by example. Quiet example, too.

**Noah:** Exactly. The other side of it is also always trying to make our records ourselves and in an interesting and unique way. Partially, just because we're all artists. I'm not actually a visual artist, but I just try to think creatively. I get really frustrated when things get in a rut.

**Eric:** Also, I'd say Noah comes from a background where both of his parents are very active in a counterculture movement. His father writes protest songs, so I think

Noah takes that spirit but forms it in a more ambiguous way. The meaning is still all there, but it's not so literal all the time. It's one thing I really appreciate about it.

**Noah:** I think when you come from a place where you hear a lot of protest music and stuff, coming from somebody who grew up loving Bob Dylan and still loves Bob Dylan and Woody Guthrie. One thing I like in their music, is that it is often so direct. That works really well for some people, and it's not something I dislike, but it doesn't work for me. I have a really hard time defining something too precisely because I just don't think there is one simple answer to anything.

**Todd:** The brackets that I put it in for punk rock are the Dead Kennedys. I really like the Dead Kennedys, but I don't really want Phyllis Schlafly to "ram it up her cunt"

anymore. I can take two steps back and say to her, "Oh, you're an ideologue and your ideas are harmful." We're all going to a nuclear extinction.

**Eric:** Although the version of "California Über Alles" with Jerry Brown is now relevant again.

**Noah:** It occasionally comes in cycles.

**Todd:** We have some almost-permanent politicians in California. Protest music. There's a Wreck Of The Zephyr song called, "Triangle Fire." And I'm assuming that's the Triangle Shirtwaist fire. Two questions; one: What's a shirtwaist?

**Noah:** That's a fair question that I don't have the answer to. I'm going to put out two guesses and they both could be very wrong. One: We're talking about a completely different piece of clothing that which doesn't

exist anymore when you had longer garments and there was a cinching of it or something.

**Todd:** You're absolutely right. It's kind of like a shirt that operates like a shirt but looks like a blouse. It's kind of like a shirt with a corset. It was called shirt waist. It was also going out of fashion. So the whole thing with the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire—which killed most of their seamstresses—because fashion is highly competitive and constantly changing, the factory was overproducing and pushing their employees way too hard.

**Noah:** And locking the doors.

**Todd:** And blocking the fire exits. Someone threw a cigarette down. It was one of the largest domestic tragedies in American history. Why would that be an inspiration for a song for Wreck Of The Zephyr?

**Noah:** I've been focused on union labor issues. The idea of class struggle is inspiring to me in general because I think it's the ultimate issue in our society. It's something that makes me really depressed all the time. Not just income disparity, an issue which is getting elevated media attention now because of the Occupy movement and some other things. But even more so, because here's this issue that really does spread across all lines. Rich and poor—it doesn't matter what race or your sexual orientation or anything. I think the idea of people being turned against each other, you see it everywhere. The really classic example—which has been used over and over again since then—is the partition between India and Pakistan.

**Todd:** Right, there was West Pakistan for a bit.

**Noah:** Exactly. Gandhi succeeded by—when I say Gandhi I'm using him as a name to sum up all the millions of Indians, which included Pakistan at the time—fighting nonviolently for their rights.

**Todd:** And he was totally against the division between Hindus and Muslims within India.

**Noah:** It was pretty much the British who helped form that division, or who were in the workings of that.

**Todd:** Facilitated it, for sure. Encouraged it.

**Noah:** Because they knew that best thing to do when you want to control somebody is to turn them against each other.

**Todd:** Divide and conquer.

**Noah:** Exactly. I think you see it everywhere. The Tea Party, here and now, is such a good example of that. You have people who clearly would benefit, let's say, from a universal health care system.

**Todd:** People who would benefit from forty hours a week, not slicing and dicing your hourly wage, getting paid a living wage. How is that horrible? And if you get hurt on the job, your job helps pay for it. What's wrong with that?

**Noah:** Right. Just to go into a little more, I was thinking the other day it's so funny because there's been anti-union propaganda for years and years now. We've gone from a country where almost everyone was unionized, or a very significant portion...

**Todd:** ...and union conscious.

**Noah:** Exactly. You were a proud member of a union. And that was a time in which

everything was actually going pretty well. I'm going to step way back from that. [Laughter] Everything was not going pretty well. But in terms of workplace rights, a lot of people could work blue collar jobs, or jobs that are now minimum wage jobs that were then the kind of jobs that you could send your kids to college and have health care and whatnot. They've done a good job of demeaning unions and making it all about how corrupt unions are. And, obviously, there've been incidents of corruption. Any time there's money involved, there's going to be corruption.

**Todd:** Money in large scale will always corrupt things.

**Noah:** It's funny that when a union tries to organize and help people out, it's like, "Oh they're forcing themselves on people and they're telling everyone what to do." They're cast as these evil organizations that are keeping workers from just coming to working and doing their thing. And they're greedy when workers are asking for an extension to their pension or a raise or anything.

**Todd:** Or their 401k to actually be there when they're done.

**Noah:** Exactly. That's kind of "greedy." They're keeping corporations from just being there and providing more jobs.

**Todd:** So, you guys are definitely part of a DIY underground, but, at the same time in Los Angeles, you seem to be on the periphery of a lot of other bands. Is this intentional?

**Eric:** That's a good question. I don't know if it's so much by choice or just kind of by necessity at this point.

**Noah:** First of all, I think attaching ourselves to any one scene never feels like who we are. We don't do anything for any one scene. The idea of being DIY and independent is really important. Beyond that, who we play with, the aesthetics, sonic or visual, don't really matter. I want to appreciate them, but falling into one certain camp isn't that important to me. Honesty and strong values matter to me. By values, I mean, independence, non-reliance on corporate pandering, things like that. That can come from anybody. I met Daryl while I was running a space. It was really amazing the first time I went to a show at Daryl's house and realized, "Oh, here is a punk scene in L.A. that is really, really strong and fertile and filled with different ideas."

**Todd:** And fun.

**Noah:** And fun!

**Eric:** Also, I'd say sincerity is most important to the three of us. I like to think that we all have strong bullshit detectors. We bristle when we detect somebody who's just trying to do it for the sake of getting famous.

**Daryl:** I was also kind of wondering what you think the role of Dig In played in the evolution of Wreck Of The Zephyr.

**Todd:** Dig In was an all ages space that Noah ran for almost a year to the day.

**Noah:** I mean, when you run a space, it makes you a lot more cognizant of both sides. I think that's pretty classic. A lot of people who run venues have been or are performers. So I don't think there's anything rare about that.

**Todd:** I remember a story you told us is that, you had rules; I think it was a three-band rule. And you know how certain people will react: "Oh, man. Punx, not rules!" But when you went away from those and those rules got broken, bad things happened.

**Noah:** Quite honestly, I think rules are great. It depends on who makes them.

**Todd:** And how they're enforced.

**Noah:** Right, and how they're enforced. The substance of the rule. I think if they're used appropriately, rules are a way to get something done. Obviously, it's nice to give things some liquidity and room to grow and change and shift. But when you don't give anything any guidance at all, it falls apart. I believe that. Once again, to turn to the Occupy movement. You go to these things where they do this consensus, governing crap. I'm sure I can get into a ton of arguments based on that statement. But nothing gets done because one person can stop everybody. Everybody can agree and one person can put a halt to something actually happening.

**Todd:** It's the cult of the meeting.

**Noah:** It's really too bad because I think everybody deserves a right to have a voice.... Doing Dig In, I was really trying to stick to the rules, but I also have a problem with being a little bit of a people pleaser. I have a hard time sticking to my rules sometimes. And I paid the price super hard. I was often the only person there in a position of authority—or the only person who's actually paying the rent and running the space. When you have six bands playing all of a sudden and people show up, you can't control everyone when you're trying to run the door and do the sound.

**Todd:** Check the street, make sure no one's drinking outside.

**Noah:** Exactly. There's no way to do all of it yourself. The reason I wanted to have three bands is because I think that's best for everyone. That way everybody gets an opportunity to be heard, people aren't as distracted, the bands all get to play at a reasonable hour in the evening.

**Todd:** People have got to work, man. I don't want to stand for five hours looking at stuff.

**Noah:** Exactly. Honestly, when you listen to music at home, you can do other things. If you want to listen to something dedicatedly, you probably listen to one record. Maybe, twenty to forty-five minutes of music. So the idea that you should have to sit through six bands, even if they're playing short sets, it's just really hard. Your feet are tired from being at work or whatever, just from having a long day. Even if I'm at a show with bands that I love, I lose focus. It's not fair to myself or the band. And for that reason, I wanted three bands and everybody gets to have a good spot.

Because then, unlike long bills, if you're the first band you don't have to start at seven in the evening. With long bills, the first band or two are screwed. The last bands are playing at like one in the morning. Half the people have left or are just inebriated to the point of not being able to pay attention at all.



JESSICA GOSSELIN



**I like things that are open to interpretation. I like that you bring yourself to it and can take whatever meaning you want from it.**

**Todd:** On the opposite side of that, I sometimes have really dumb DIY conversations with myself. When was the last time you thought, “Oh I can’t do this because this is going to go against my ethics?”

**Noah:** Oh, I think I pretty much spend my entire life questioning myself and being, “Can I do this? Should I not do this?” I have to remember that the thing I try to give myself is, “Okay, we can all pick our battles.” I still end up beating myself up all the time.

**Todd:** Give me one example.

**Dave:** I think collectively, as a band, the amount of Subway sandwiches we ate on the last tour, violated some of our ethos.

**Eric:** Noah and I will often have hypothetical conversations where we have determined that we wouldn’t go onto Letterman, but we would go onto Conan. Meanwhile, it’s a struggle to get a show in L.A.

**Noah:** I think it’s a struggle in general. Sometimes it will be that a band offers us a show, I’m not super into them. But it’s a show where maybe there could be a bunch of cool people. Not that every band we play with has to be a band I love, but... a band I don’t really think they’re super great people?

**Todd:** Respect.

**Noah:** Now, granted, if it was a thing where it was a white power band, it obviously would not be a question. “Aw man, there’s gonna be a lot of people there. I mean, they’re Nazis, but there’s going to be a ton of them!”

**Eric:** “We could really get our message out!”

**Dave:** “Our most dedicated fans...”

**Noah:** When we were in Minneapolis, a guy from the other band we played with, Brain Tumors, came up to Dave afterwards and said, “Not my thing. You guys are really good. And don’t take this the wrong way—

let me finish—but I think you guys should play with a Christian rock band the next time you come through.” [laughter]

**Dave:** How do I not take this the wrong way? **Noah:** “Because you would really blow their minds and change their world.” Something along those lines.

**Eric:** We are often the odd man out when we play shows. If we play a hardcore show, everybody hates us because we are not hardcore. Especially on this tour, we’ve played with a bunch of soft bands, and everybody hates us—not hates us, that’s the wrong word—but we feel like the odd man out because we are so goddamned loud.

**Noah:** We’re the confusing band. I think because we draw from a lot of influences and we don’t really give a shit to slice and dice our music to make it fit into any one scene. I’m not saying these things to make it



seem as though we're so righteous, because we are not righteous. If anyone spent five minutes in the van with us they would know that, which is why we never let anyone do that. But, at the same time, I don't have any desire not to play the things that come out of us now naturally. So, because we have so many influences from so far across the board, we end up alienating people left and right, to some degree.

**Eric:** We want people to like us but we kind of don't give a shit. This is what it is, hopefully people will like it, but if not then, well, that's what it is also.

**Noah:** But the fun part of that is we do get a lot of different people who seem to hear us—and I think this goes for whenever someone likes a new band—we get everything thrown at us when people are comparing us.

**Todd:** Like Creed.

**Dave:** The Pogues. The Minutemen. Hot Snakes. We were likened in one interview to Wu Tang Clan. Really a head scratcher.

**Eric:** I think we got the Black Keys one time.  
**Noah:** The White Stripes, Supergrass..... But I always take it as a compliment. Even if I don't like the band that someone is comparing us to. Honestly, I don't mean this as anything against White Stripes, but if we

got the White Stripes every single time—you just don't want to get any band every time. If I got Black Flag every time, I wouldn't want that either. I love Black Flag, but I don't want to be compared that closely to anyone. It's nice but it makes for a lot of situations where we're playing with a hardcore band and people are bummed out. Even when we played with Dudes Night and Horror Squad and all those guys, it was super fun, everyone was so nice, but when we played there was definitely this look that people have...

**Todd:** It's the dog tilting its head to the stereo.

**Noah:** Exactly. And the tongue is hanging out. There's a smile, but it's a confused smile.

**Dave:** It doesn't run out the door, but...

**Eric:** My favorite, on the website when we played in Boston, we were playing with some other bands, you know, Dead Ellington, punk, punk, punk... Wreck Of The Zephyr, "alternative." [laughter]

**Todd:** At least it wasn't grunge.

**Dave:** A close cousin maybe.

**Todd:** So, Dave and Eric, I'm interested in what you guys do on a day-to-day basis. You both work in the entertainment industry, is that correct?

**Dave:** Yeah. I'm an assistant director, so I work on different indie films and television.

I do some work with this company Absolutely, which is Tim & Eric's company. The TV I do is surrealist, occasionally stoner comedy. Weird stuff. Just a lot managing sets, essentially.

**Eric:** I'm a story producer on various reality shows, as non-punk as that is to say, but it pays the bills and it allows us to make our own stuff on the side.

**Todd:** That's what I'm trying to get at, too. Everybody has to get a job, unless you're a shitbag or a really good anarchist. Neither one of those career paths have presented itself to me. If you're going to do Janice Dickinson stuff, you'll have the ability to do this stuff. Is there any Venn diagram at all? Are people that you work with interested in independent music and/or Wreck Of The Zephyr?

**Dave:** It's a case-by-case thing because our work is so project-oriented. Sometimes, you'll have the good fortune of working with like-minded people and punks and grown-up punks, but it really changes. Sometimes you're not so lucky. Sometimes they're playing Fugazi on set.

**Todd:** Has anybody surprised you?

**Eric:** Yeah, totally. The people I work with now. Usually when people are like, "Oh, you're in a band? What kind of band are

BETH DAZET



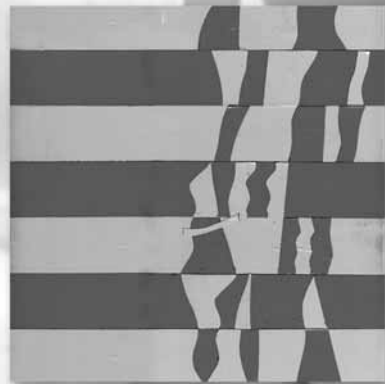
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you in?" I'm like, "Well, it's kind of an indie punk band, or whatever, but you probably won't like us." But I'll still send them a link just because they ask. But the people I work with now are like, "That's fucking awesome! Let me know when you play shows." That always shocks me because they're great people but they don't seem like they would be into what we do.

**Dave:** It's always a very refreshing feeling when you find those people. I remember I went to this set of this show I was working on a year ago and the lead actor saw my

you'd think you'd talk to Zack de la Rocha about essentially. [Todd laughs] I've given advice sometimes to this woman who comes in. Not that I'm like some great fountain of advice, but I like to listen to people and be a sounding board. Definitely a lot of sound. And a lot of people being bored. [Laughs] But this woman, Franny, who plays a character on that show, *Six Feet Under*. It's an HBO show from a few years ago. It's a really amazing show. This woman Franny has come in for years so sometimes, when something is going on in her life, we'll chat it

**Eric:** I think in that case it was fake, blood-soaked bread rolled up in Saran wrap. For *Yeti: A Love Story* they were packing peanuts soaked in blood, sealed up in shrink wrap.

**Noah:** Not fake blood.

**Dave:** Chorizo would certainly be more realistic, but my female dog counterpart was a vegetarian so we had to use sourdough.

**Todd:** That would explain why the pigeon was eating it too, getting the bread out.

**Dave:** That was the greatest moment. That shoot was miserable, for the record. We were in this shit- and piss-soaked alley.

## Noah and I will often have hypothetical conversations where we have determined that we wouldn't go onto Letterman, but we would go onto Conan. Meanwhile, it's a struggle to get a show in L.A.

Wipers shirt and was like, "Right on, man." It was just not the kind of person, necessarily, I would expect. But that's such a refreshing thing. It's like a secret handshake.

**Todd:** And you don't want to do the dick move, "This is Wipers, you realize that?"

**Noah:** One of my favorites, was when you were on set with Lil' John, right? For that random MTV spot you did and Dave was wearing a Sonic Youth shirt.

**Dave:** Lil' John, yeah. "Sonic Youth! That's good shit." [laughter] You never know. It's cool. I did a movie with David Banner, who's kind of like a dirty South rapper and we went drinking one night at the bar after. He put like Björk and The Pixies on the jukebox for his first two selects. You never really know what's in a person's brain, or where their tastes lie.

**Eric:** The jobs that Dave and I have to do help us. We make our own films on the side and, obviously, the band. Even though sometimes we beat ourselves up—"Oh man, I wish I was doing what I really love to be doing"—we still are trying to be as active as possible.

**Daryl:** Noah, you're a waiter at a café?

**Noah:** Correct.

**Daryl:** And you encounter famous people fairly regularly?

**Noah:** Yeah, to a degree.

**Daryl:** Have you ever received any good advice from any of these famous people?

**Noah:** Y' know, honestly, I try not to talk to the famous people. I try to communicate with them like I would with anybody else.

**Daryl:** You don't want to bug them. But you do converse with certain people.

**Noah:** I end up with some really long conversations with Zack de la Rocha because he's a regular. He's a really nice guy, actually, to dispel any myths. We just talk about punk usually, or the depressing state of Arizona immigration law. We talk about the things

out. I don't have any specific piece of advice that I gave to her off the top of my head, but we have conversations like that.

The best thing about Auntie Em's, the name of the place I work, is that because we're a bit off the beaten path up here, we get kind of interesting celebrities. We did have Joe Montana once.

**Todd:** Going completely in another direction, a philosophical question. How do dogs go from making French press coffee to developing a taste for human flesh and knife fighting?

**Dave:** I think the answer is "full moons."

**Noah:** Just to be clear, we are referencing the music video we made... for those who aren't as deeply researched as you are.

**Todd:** "The Rolling Over Process" video. I'm trying to make an association. You guys are film guys; I'm sure you had some input into it.

**Dave:** Well, our friend Dave Reich came up with the concept, which is that Noah is at Auntie Em's. He comes home from a long day and there are humans in dog suits and they jump on him. I'm one of them, and we're licking his face and we give him French press coffee. Then we get out and essentially go on this killing rampage.

**Eric:** They kill me. I'm an angry businessman.

**Dave:** Because who would a dog rather kill than an angry businessman? Dave Reich came up with the idea and I think at first we all kind of were like, "That's cool..." but it really grew on us over time. I produced and edited it. Dave Reich shot and directed it. It was largely him, but we collaborated to make it. It was fun.

**Todd:** The guts that were used, were those the same type of guts from *Yeti: A Love Story*?

**Eric:** Yeah! They were actually very similar. The exact same ones, right?

**Dave:** Yeah, soaked bread and plastic.

**Todd:** I wanted to know, "Is that chorizo?"

**Eric:** Literally, a shitty alley.

**Dave:** We were downtown. It was the gnarliest thing. Eric is lying in a pool of blood and this filth for six hours, while Emilia and I are shooting this stunt.

**Noah:** It's almost worse than real blood. It's a pool of syrup. It's even stickier than blood.

**Eric:** I actually got a stomach bug from that, I'm pretty sure, from just laying on that crappy ground.

**Dave:** Myself and Emilia [the other actress in the video] are chewing this bread and Dave's going, "Alright, we need one more take, one more take, different angle." There's only so many guts, so after awhile you're like, "I know I've chewed this shit before." It was really the worst experience, but it turned out pretty weird.

**Todd:** It turned out great. Alright, tattoos. Noah, do you have a Pac-Man tattoo?

**Noah:** I don't, it's not a Pac-Man tattoo, but that's funny because it does tie in. It's a tattoo of *The Missing Piece*. *The Missing Piece* is a Shel Silverstein book, so it's another children's book reference. It's a really good one. It's super simple, barely any words in it at all. It's a little circle, he looks like Pac-Man, or as my British friend calls it, "Pac-Man on a string," and he's just rolling down the road, looking for his missing piece. He's got this little triangle, what looks like a mouth, but really it's the missing piece of a circle, his complete self. He keeps rolling upon these other triangles, some are too small; some are too big. I actually have the piece on my other arm, which I thought was a "cute" combination. [laughter] They've been giving me a hard time recently for saying the word "cute" too much. I live with a woman who says cute a lot. Things are cute all the time. But there's also a dark side because it could never be reached. I have the piece on one shoulder and the circle on the other so they could never actually meet.



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**Todd:** Well, not while you're alive.

**Dave:** An existential tattoo.

**Eric:** But your heart's in the middle.

**Noah:** So cute.

**Todd:** So Eric, I think you have "leisure" on your left foot?

**Eric:** I do, I have Love and Leisure. On my right foot I have a lady and it says, "Love." And on the left foot I have a couch and it says, "Leisure."

me take my flannel off and on because I couldn't even move my arm. So we're like, "All right, let's go to CVS and get some heat packs, get some ibuprofen, start that process." Maybe two hours later we find something remotely resembling a town. They have a prison, a sheriff's training center, a graveyard, and thirty houses.

**Noah:** There, you're either a good guy, a bad guy, or a dead guy. And not a woman.

**Dave:** We were in college. My friend Ditch and I were sitting in our house, and Eric walked by and I went, "Yo Gosselin!" And Ditch asked, "What's a gosselin?" I mean, really, it's a baby goose if I'm not mistaken, but I said, "Oh, it's Eric's last name." And he's like, "It doesn't sound like a last name to me, man. That should be a holiday." So I said, "Alright, let's start a holiday called, Gosselin on January 27<sup>th</sup>."

That's the whole point of punk is to take control.

Take control of your life.

**Todd:** It'd be funny if the words were swapped out though. [laughter]

**Eric:** And, actually, a few of my friends from Sanford, Maine, where I grew up, all have the same two tattoos on their feet. I have a couple of tattoos I got with other people, like the Pratt Rat with Noah and I have a *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* one that I got with my friend Ryan. We're both super into horror movies. I got like twelve or thirteen tattoos. I can't remember exactly. I lost track.

**Dave:** I have one tattoo. It's the fox from *The Little Prince*.

**Noah:** Also a children's book!

**Dave:** We're kind of a children's book-themed band.

**Eric:** I don't have any children's book tattoos, I don't think.

**Dave:** Not for long.... When these guys got their Pratt Rat tattoos, I got a lot of shit for not getting one, but I didn't want to be the guy with two, two-dimensional mammals.

**Noah:** You'd never live it down. People around the globe would be blogging about it.

**Eric:** I think my favorite tattoo that I have is a prosthetic leg on my actual leg ... which was an impulse.

**Todd:** Give me the worst of your last three-week tour?

**Dave:** Well, the first worst is me, the drummer, throwing my shoulder out on day three.

**Todd:** Air drumming, correct? [Laughter]

**Dave:** Embarrassingly enough, I was in the van air drumming to a Hundreds And Thousands song. [Laughter] We were in west Texas. We'd only played one show and we'd just woken up. I was spacing out, looking out the window air drumming. I just pulled something. I had injured it a few weeks before, gone to acupuncture. Anyway, I feel my nerves bubbling up; "We have to play Austin tonight. How am I going to do this?" Noah had to help

**Dave:** We go to the gas station and I ask the lady if there's a CVS or a Walgreens nearby and she cackled like a witch. She's like, "CVS? Not even for a hundred miles. Not even in Van Horn." Which is like the town over.

**Noah:** It's funny when someone says the name of a town with such great identification. She might as well have said New York.

**Dave:** You really have to wonder what these people do if they need a band aid, or toothpaste or something.

**Noah:** That's why there's a graveyard.

**Dave:** Long story short, I took some painkillers that night, got drunk. Noah covered me in Icy Hot. [Laughter]

**Noah:** That wasn't for the injury; that's just something we do.

**Dave:** It was so hot drumming that my arm started to burn. It felt fine muscularly, but it was in crazy, searing pain from this activated Icy Hot.

**Noah:** So, as he drummed, he got hotter and hotter and the Icy Hot builds off of that, it thrives on it. It's like pouring gas in the tank. He literally was burned on his arm by the Icy Hot.

**Dave:** So that was the worst.

**Todd:** Dave, you got an Academy Award as second assistant director for *The Artist*?

**Dave:** I was the second assistant director for the Academy Award-winning film, *The Artist*. But I don't go home and polish an Oscar.

**Todd:** So you actually didn't use it as a bong?

**Dave:** No, I did use it as a bong.

**Eric:** I do recommend everybody checks out the blog, (davelooksstoned.tumblr.com)

**Dave:** Which Eric started, which are just shitty pictures of me. I've never been stoned. I don't smoke, but I always look like it. [Laughter]

**Todd:** Eric, tell me about something.

**Eric:** We all celebrate this absurdist holiday that Dave pretty much created with his friend Ryan called, Gosselin, which is my last name but it has nothing to do with me.

It developed into this freak show we have every year. It's like Cirque du Soleil from hell; there's this performance element. There are these things that change every year. Maybe someone will have to come as a space penguin. There are these seventeen rules for the night.

**Eric:** We all determine around Christmas time what the seventeen rules are going to be, the Points we call them. We write them on the back of a pizza box. As we've been getting older and older and have more means, they've gotten bigger and crazier. One year we had a dunk tank and...

**Dave:** An adult ball pit. One of the points this year was, "Make way for the wedding bands." So, Noah and I formed this wedding band with our friends and we played the worst, the most heinously cliché songs. Celebrate the chicken dance.

**Noah:** It's basically a themed party with a shifting theme that isn't any one thing even in a single year.

**Dave:** The theme is chaos, essentially.

**Noah:** But I think Gosselin, in general, is important in its relation to the band in that it's another thing that we all do together. I think what makes this band whatever it is— however much people hate it or like it, or don't give a shit about it most often— we've done so many things together over the years. In a very clichéd way, we're essentially like brothers because we do so many things together and we fight stupidly. We peck at each other.

**Eric:** Especially in the van.

**Dave:** We either peck at Goldfish or each other. [Laughter] Those are our two main pecking points.

[passthefist.com/artists/wreck-of-the-zephyr/wreckofthezephyr.bandcamp.com](http://passthefist.com/artists/wreck-of-the-zephyr/wreckofthezephyr.bandcamp.com)



# Lenguas Lazgas





SHANTY CHERYL

What's a punk to do? Lenguas Largas—long tongues—feel like they're licking the back of my brain when I listen to them. There's so much going on in their songs. It's layered but direct. There's beautiful scenery running along sweeping, well-paved roads. It may be unfamiliar musical territory for many punks. Psyche, smoothly smoky guitars, valleys and vistas, and whipping drone surely isn't 1-2-3-4, 1!-2!-3!-4!, but those with an appreciation for the crying ghost of Roky Erickson and the bright-and-dark-and-humble genius of the Resonars will find themselves in unwavering hands.

There are six or seven members of Lenguas at any one time—interchangeable parts, molded by work schedules, family obligations, and union apprenticeships. At the helm of this Tucson Voltron is Isaac Reyes of Shark Pants and Swing Ding Amigos. The result is a larger dynamic range, not a self-indulgent mess of egos. It's stripped-down excess. True value encased in dirty opulence.

Here's some head space. Soak in it, one image after another. Think yard sale, not department store. Think sweaty bikers who've got your back Black Sabbath, not bro-gasm moshcore. Black velvet paintings of clowns, revolutionaries, beautiful women. Heat and dust. Carne asada on a backyard grill, limes squeezed, white-hot coals.

Granted, Lenguas is a hard sell to the black-clad, bullet-belted, unhappy-dogs-on-a-leash outside-of-shows crowd. But for those of us who like fucking—good ol' fashioned, consensual we're-all-adults-here-coitus-music, Lenguas is awesome. They ooze what has long been dried up in much of punk: booty-shaking sexuality. This shit's sexy.

From where you're sitting right now, you may not know it, but poised in front of you is Lenguas Largas, holding a paint brush up to your mind—that empty canvas of possibility—with their very long tongues.

Isaac Reyes—guitar, singer  
Dick Sullivan—drums  
Ricky "Shimo" Custodio—guitar  
Mark Beef—guitar  
Brian Bolt—drums  
Tommy Melchionda—baritone guitar  
John Polle—baritone guitar

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**Todd:** Tell me a little bit about the band. I know that Isaac and Dickey are both in Shark Pants. Mark Beef is, umm...

**Mark:** I have been in a lot of unknown bands.

**Todd:** Pop Gestapo. Also a stalwart of Tucson. Fair enough? Curmudgeon?

**Mark:** Whatever that means. Yeah, curmudgeon.

**Todd:** So why start something new? Why start Lenguas Largas? Why do anything besides the bands you're in?

**Isaac:** Because I'm a fucking artist and I need to create shit. That's why.

**Todd:** What couldn't you create with Shark Pants?

**Isaac:** I wanted to do something that wasn't just limited to a

three-piece. I wanted to experiment and just be creative with stuff. I love punk rock and I think no matter what I do it's still going to be punk rock, but I like to experiment. I like to blow my mind, you know?

**Mark:** This isn't punk rock? I quit.

**Isaac:** They don't want to worry about either, "Oh, I've got to write a fast song," or a loud song. I just like writing songs.

**Todd:** How come these guys, then? How'd you find Ricky?

**Ricky:** [sigh] [laughter] I guess Isaac and I started jamming and recording. He was recording songs for me and I was helping him add stuff to his songs.

**Todd:** How did you come across one another?

**Ricky:** We're both from Nogales (Mexico, not the Arizona border town of the same name).

**Isaac:** When I was in junior high, me and my brother used to hang out at the music store that was by our school and just play every guitar until they kicked us out. I remember one time we were in there—Ricky came in with some friends of his. We didn't know each other and he just started playing "Light My Fire" on the keyboard and we're like, "Holy shit! That guy's the best!" [laughter] He lived down the street from where I lived and I was just trying to do more recording than actually playing. I had this "I don't want to play anymore. I just want to record shit" type of mindset. That's all we would do: get super high and just record shit, make shit up, and it turned into some nice songs.

**Mark:** Ricky drank tea.

**Dick:** Caffeine-free.

**Todd:** We've talked before, Isaac, and you really want to create a huge fucking anthem for the ages.

**Isaac:** An anthem for the ages? I don't remember.

**Mark:** He was really high when he said that.

**Isaac:** I guess so. I have different goals. I always wanted to have a song that they play at a strip club. That's one of them.

**Dick:** Or at a sporting event.

**Isaac:** Yeah, but that's not going to happen. I'm just a big fan of hooks.

**Todd:** Why don't you think it's going to happen?

**Isaac:** I don't know.

**Dick:** It's already happened; people just don't know it. [laughter]

**Isaac:** I guess. I don't know.

**Todd:** Do you think you're out of time, out of the wrong era? Like if you were doing this in the '70s or you were a band like Queen or something?

**Mark:** Not to speak for him, but I think mostly it's probably because he doesn't have a huge fucking inflated ego, so he's not one of those people who thinks, "Oh yeah! I'm gonna be a rock star!"

**Isaac:** But secretly, I do. [laughter]

**Todd:** But you think there's a little bit of inter-tension with yourself?

**Isaac:** I'm just my own aphrodisiac.

**Mark:** I don't mean that—like there's inter-tension—I just think that he's pretty humble and he's like, "I'm just a normal dude and I'm writing songs." And I think if you asked the Ramones in '74 if they ever thought their

song was going to be played in baseball stadiums and football stadiums... Maybe a couple of them were like "Fuck yeah! Yeah!"

**Todd:** Johnny would be, "Yeah!"

**Mark:** Some of them would be like, "What? Huh?"

**Todd:** "I just need to get everything in order right now. I need to touch all these things before I leave the house. I need to make sure my wig's adjusted."

**Isaac:** I've been told by some people that I'm too nice.

**Todd:** That's not true.

**Isaac:** I'm a fucking dick! [laughter]

**Todd:** If you guys can indulge me for a second, here's a list of bands and musicians Lengua Larga has been compared to so far that I found in my research.

**Isaac:** I've got one. You probably have this one on there too.

**Todd:** Pere Ubu, The Murmaids, The Devil, as a band.

**Isaac:** Devil?

**Todd:** Devil. Air. El Ten Eleven. M83. Love. Silvio Rodriguez. "T-Rex filtered through *Here Come the Warm Jets*-era Brian Eno prism." "Pure sand and rattlesnake." Experimental. This is how you put it: "Ghettotech."

**Isaac:** That's just because on Myspace, it was one of the options "Duuuude!" [laughter]

**Todd:** Wire. Bronco. Marked Men. Roky Erickson. Captain Beefheart. Devo. Punk prog rock. "One half Ennio Morricone and one-half old school Tucson punk."

**Dick:** I think I've only heard of nine of those things. [laughter]

**Mark:** You're doing better than me.

**Isaac:** We played a show in Austin one time at this weird hippie party and we ended up getting stranded. They kicked everybody out, but somebody had parked behind us so we couldn't leave. They kept trying to kick us out—"Get out!" "How?!" Brandon from Dude James was there and sitting down. He came over to hang out with us and this chick is like, "You guys remind me of Kings Of Leon." [laughter] And Brandon's just laughing at us.

**Todd:** What I think is that that's a reflection of what people like and they can't express what you're about.

**Isaac:** They're limited.

**Todd:** Their frame of reference.

**Isaac:** Their library, right. Their frame of reference.

**Todd:** Isaac, another review said that Lengua Larga was, "a refutation of almost everything that the desert has produced."

**Isaac:** Huh. I don't know what the fuck that means. People outside of punk rock; if they hear about Tucson, they just think of Calexico.

**Todd:** Desert rock.

**Isaac:** Yeah, that kind of shit.

**Dick:** Well, they created it. [laughter]

**Isaac:** Yeah, I guess, but that's what everybody thinks of when they think of it.

**Todd:** That's one of the difficulties and limitations of writing about music.

**Isaac:** Frames of reference.

**Todd:** I review all the time, too. It's difficult. You hope that person's saying, "This is really good. I like them."

**Isaac:** I guess. That's how you describe music—just by where they live?

**Todd:** Because there isn't a lot of desert rock coming out of Minneapolis.

**Dick:** That's where it started, though, right, pretty much. [laughter] If you look at the sound.

**Mark:** That's the high desert sound.

**Dick:** I'm being serious right now.

**Todd:** Name a band.

**Dick:** I can't. You have to come up with it on your own. Really go back and listen and you'll see.

**Todd:** I'm going to agree with Beef, in that I think you're a punk band. Because I come from a world where punk is very expansive and always doing new things.

**Isaac:** We're basically the same people we've always been and we play with bands we've been playing with or we're friends with or that we like now.

**Mark:** Although I would rather play with Kings Of Leon than a punk band. Deli trays are better. [laughter]

**Isaac:** Is that a movie? [laughter] This is the only band that I've ever had that the hipster bars in town ask us to play. But now we can't even play them because Mark fucking poured a beer on the guy's head and the guy ended up getting punched in the face, like, seven times.

**Mark:** Not by me!

**Dick:** "Not by me!" [laughter] I like that he grabbed the mic. That was awesome.

**Isaac:** Have to talk into the mic when you're talking shit.

**Dick:** I thought you could understand my nods on this interview.

**Todd:** So, Mark, how'd you get kicked out of a hipster bar?

**Mark:** Basically, it started even before we played there. Knockout Pills and the Easy Action. It was supposed to be the Riverboat Gamblers but they didn't play. It was, like, twenty people at the show, tops, besides the bands. It was me, eight of my friends, and maybe six other people. We were doing what you do at an Easy Action/Knockout Pills show... But it wasn't out of control...

**Todd:** Very friendly, no one's hitting the bartender...

**Mark:** It's me and my friends not bumping into each other. And at one point I took my shirt off because I was really sweaty. So that was probably over the line. And then the guy whose name is Randy, who is the manager/bouncer/fun police, he came up and told me I had to put my shirt back on and for us to stop bumping into each other. I was like, "Uh, okay."

Then we started doing it again. The next thing I know, there's six fucking cops walking into the place, pointing at me and all my friends and going, "You, you, you, you, out!" So we go outside, they ID us all, and then basically say, "You have to leave." Except for my one friend who had a warrant supposedly for his arrest, which he had squashed but had somehow popped up, so he ended up spending three days in jail.

I was mad at the place from that. Go forward four years. [laughter] I would go there



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*I'm just my own aphrodisiac.*

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I've been told by some people that I'm too nice.



once and awhile but, usually, I did not like going to that place. Fifty Million played across the street at the Dairy Queen parking lot one time and dude called the cops on them.

So, anyway, we're playing with Digital Leather. Everything's fine. We get done, I get off the stage. A friend of mine is jumping around during Digital Leather and bumping into other people. I put my arm around him because I can see the people who work there getting tense. I keep him next to me. We're still kind of moving around, bumping around, but we're not bumping into other people. Same dude comes up to me and him and goes, "I told you to stop!" to the kid, Jesse. And I'm like, "Hey, I'm kind of controlling it." And he's like, "You're 86ed!" And I'm like, "Fuck you." I gave him the double fingers and poured my beer on his head. And then walked out. Well, I got up on stage first...

**Isaac:** Digital Leather is playing and he just gets up on stage and he's like, "Fuck you guys! Fuck this place! Fuck you guys for supporting it and especially fuck that guy!" And he just leaves. [laughter]

**Mark:** And I guess some stuff happened after that. Oh, I left my debit card because I was running a tab. So I call fucking Isaac. "Hey, can you close my tab out? Give them like a ten dollar tip. Just get my card." They're arguing with Isaac over the phone while I'm talking to him, won't give him the ID. They want me to come back so they can tell me that I can never come back. I'm like, "Ugh, whatever." Finally, they give him an ID—not an ID a debit card—but a completely different person. Someone that's not even me.

**Dick:** We bought a lot of records and stuff. [laughter]

**Mark:** That's that.

**Isaac:** Don't hug people at shows. [laughter]

**Todd:** I went to college in Flagstaff and the Grateful Dead reigned supreme. Jerry Garcia died when I was in college.

**Isaac:** There's a lot of Grateful Dead people up there.

**Dick:** And you graduated? You were okay and everything?

**Todd:** It was traumatic. I have to commend Lenguas Largas for having more than six people in the band and a.) not being a crappy ska band and b.) not being a clusterfuck.

**Isaac:** Aww, thanks, man.

**Todd:** When I see more than four people load their shit up on stage, I tend to want to leave. What limitations do you have in the band for not just becoming a space jam?

**Dick:** Wah-pa! [whip noise] [laughter] Ricky tells us what to do.

**Mark:** "Isaac, sit there." Ricky's Hitler.

**Todd:** Is there a secret mastermind. Is it pretty democratic?

**Dick:** It's Ricky's mustache.

**Ricky:** I tell people that Isaac has to do the job. Too many notes.

**Dick:** Most of us don't want a solo, except Ricky. That's what he's supposed to do.

**Isaac:** I pretty much already have an idea of what the song is going to be. I already have

the part figured out or I'll say, "Okay, make up a part here." And if it's not working, it's not working. And that's basically it. It's called creative control. [laughter]

**Todd:** But you are the captain. Is that true?

**Ricky:** Well, he writes the songs.

**Isaac:** Ricky adds the flavor to it. This is second time—the stuff we're doing with Todd (Congelliere, Recess Records) this is the second, actually, full band recording. All the other stuff we've put out has been home recordings of me and Ricky, doing stuff. That's where it started. We're just taking those songs and figuring out what will work as a band. Everybody just learns their parts and we practice. We like doing it.

**Todd:** Dickey, what's the benefit of having two drummers? I like it. I think the first time I saw two drummers and really liked it was the Dirtbombs. It was just more powerful.

**Dick:** I guess the benefit is you get to play more complicated things, but it doesn't even seem like it when you're hearing the recording. Some people are probably going, "How the hell are they doing that? That's probably overdubbed." We can just play off of each other. It's actually really fun. [laughs]

**Todd:** I don't know, because I haven't played music, but is the drumming kind of analogous to lead guitar and a rhythm guitar? You have different tasks?

**Dick:** I guess sort of similar. With the analogy of the rhythm guitar—since they're holding it down—and the other person gets to step out a little bit, accent some things, then drop back into the beat again. That's kind of how it goes.

**Todd:** Who's your other drummer?

**Isaac:** Brian Bolt. We've got a whole bunch of 'em. He's a Tucson guy. I've known Brian for a while. My brother had a baby, so he couldn't play with us often. I just wanted to get somebody in the band who we could actually have fun with on tour instead of worrying about how badass they are. "Alright, we're going to hang out for twelve hours in a van. You better be badass about playing your instrument, but who cares if you're a good person."

**Mark:** Me and Brian used to be in another band together. Full-Blown AIDS. Brian runs a record label, Going Apeshit Records. He's in a couple other bands back in Tucson.

**Dick:** Sabertooth Snatch.

**Todd:** It could really easily turn into a noodley mess. That's what I like about Lenguas. I get to see band members who I trust go into different directions. A good band comparison would be Mind Spiders. I think Marked Men are amazing and it's great to hear somebody like Mark Ryan who can look at music in a different way and then record things that are not, "Oh, it's Marked Men light" or "Oh, you're just using Marked Men discards" or whatever.

**Isaac:** For a while I just went on this whole trip. "You know what? I've had all these songs all my life that I've never been able to use. I'll play them and—alright, that's cool"—they just disappear, you know? So I started recording every single piece of shit riff that I had.

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**Todd:** Piece of gold riff. [laughter]

**Isaac:** Did I mention that I shit gold?

**Mark:** Plus, he's getting older and it's getting harder to play super fast songs. [laughter]

**Isaac:** The truth comes out. You go through dry spells and I was forcing myself to come up with something no matter what; even if it's just one riff, like a drone or something.

**Todd:** I'm a big fan of keeping the gears going. Sometimes you're really creative and sometimes you just practice.

**Isaac:** And if it works, it works. And if it doesn't, it doesn't, you know? At least I still have it. I mean, I'll listen to it.

**Todd:** Drugs. Do you do a lot of them or do people assume that you do a lot of them because of the type of music that you play?



# Did I mention that I shit gold?

I just smoke pot and drink beer. That's it.

**Isaac:** I just smoke pot and drink beer. That's it.

**Todd:** Do people think, as a band, that you do heavy psychedelics?

**Mark:** We haven't had anybody coming up offering us stuff, which would be fine. [laughter].

**Isaac:** Actually, yeah they did. In Missoula some dude was trying to sell us acid, and he gave us his phone number but I deleted it out of my phone really quick because we were drunk.

**Dick:** Good eye, good eye. Sprayed the acid on everybody...

**Mark:** Was that the medicine man?

**Isaac:** No, no. We had a shaman in our van. [laughter] I've seen people write reviews, "These guys are drug addicts" or something. Psych-rock. Psychedelic.

**Mark:** I just think that's something that people say, a term that encompasses...

**Isaac:** It's a genre.

**Mark:** Right, right. You could be a bunch of teetotaling Christians and, if you play a certain sort of music, they'll describe it in the same way.

**Isaac:** As long as my mom still loves me, and I get to smoke pot, I don't give a fuck.

**Todd:** Absolutely. Sex. Do you think about it a lot, or do people assume that because of the type of music that you play?

**Dick:** Well, yes. [laughter] "Yes" to all counts. I think everybody knows that we're all really good in bed and that's basically why people come to see us.

**Isaac:** Some girl asked me last night, "What do you sound like?" And I forgot who said

it—"Like love-making music." "Alright, I like that."

**Todd:** I do think that's one of the limitations of punk rock. A lot of times it's asexual. There's nothing wrong with a nice, funky beat. There's not a lot of a little bit of getting down.

**Isaac:** We like soul.

**Todd:** Absolutely. And I think that comes through in the music. I think it's come through in Shark Pants, too.

**Isaac:** Every time, when we would start practice, I would always say, "Alright, that's cool; imagine a whole bunch of asses just shaking." That's the whole goal of the song.

**Dick:** But it's a pool of male asses.

**Mark:** Which is fine.

**Todd:** Got to start somewhere, Dickey.



**Dick:** I usually focus on Ricky's because it's more effeminate. [laughter]

**Dick:** Ricky's ass. It is a problem. [laughter]

**Mark:** That's definitely a problem with punk, I think, and it's because people are scared. They don't want to come across as sexist. So they're like, "We don't even want to touch on that subject or say anything or pretend."

**Todd:** Good, healthy sexuality is a beautiful thing and I like it in my music. And the first thing I was thinking of was the first time I saw Swing Dings and Levi's drum kit with all the panties in there. That's a nice touch. [laughter]

**Dick:** Those are all mom panties.

**Todd:** You got to start somewhere. Mom underpants and dude butts. That's what it's all about. [laughter]

**Isaac:** I feel like right out of high school, still. I guess my mind got stunted when I started smoking pot, and I just stayed in that same state.

**Todd:** Besides sex and sexy, what else do you think is missing in music? Or what do you miss in music? Really popular music, it goes right by me. It sounds like robots.

**Dick:** Original ideas would be nice. Maybe taking some chances with some sounds would be nice. Maybe if record labels would start signing different-sounding stuff and not be all cookie-cutter about everything.

**Ricky:** You sing like Styx all the time—copying a band straight and making scenes. People need to be more progressive, I think.

**Todd:** You guys, in a lot of ways, confuse people.

**Isaac:** Yeah. Good. [laughter]

**Todd:** You're not putting yourself in a specific genre. It's more of an *approach*. And as long as you're comfortable with it, I think it's awesome.

**Isaac:** There's no fuckin' rules written. In Arizona, there's probably rules. We're probably breaking them right now.

**Dick:** There can't be more than five guys on stage at once.

**Todd:** Alright, I want to focus on Tucson just a little bit. I like visiting Tucson. I've had a great run of bands that I think are really influential, starting with The Weird Lovemakers.

**Isaac:** They were really influential on me, too.

**Todd:** And I would say Knockout Pills. And not just as a band, but how I approach music and how I approach people, too. As musicians. I still talk to Jason Willis years and years and years afterwards.

**Isaac:** Everything learned about rock'n'roll and tour, I learned from Dickey and Chad Blacks, basically. And that's where I got my work ethic at it. Learning, "you gotta do this. You gotta be nice to people."

**Dick:** You gotta show up and play and shit.

**Isaac:** I was really shy and I was like, "I just like writing songs." It's cool. Showed me punk rock, made me have friends all over the fucking world and it's awesome.

**Todd:** Let's take a step back. I'm not just talking about punk rock now—what is one stereotype that is actually true about Tucson as a city.

**Isaac:** It's fucking hot. [laughter] It's a dry heat. It's completely true.

**Dick:** The hotdogs are really good there.

**Mark:** And it's slow. And people are lazy. Not lazy maybe, but not trying to always get something accomplished. Always trying to [frantic], "Oh we gotta do this, we gotta!"

**Todd:** A mañana—tomorrow—feel.

**Mark:** Definitely mañana.

**Todd:** I feel the same way with New Mexico, too. The Land of Tomorrow. [laughter]

**Dick:** I don't know about stereotypes in Tucson. I've never really thought about it that way. Do you mean, like, by racist jokes? [laughter] Tucson, known for their racist jokes. "Come to Tucson! To Tucson! A black guy and rabbi walk into a bar!"

**Todd:** But on the other side of that, what's something that took you a long time to discover that you really cherish now?

**Isaac:** It's pretty affordable to live there and I'm close to my family, so that's basically it. I live with my girlfriend and we have a house there, so I can't fucking leave. I'm stuck there.

**Mark:** One thing—it didn't take me long to understand that I cherished it, but it took me traveling to other places to realize how great it was there—is Mexican food. I mean I've had good Mexican food other places, and other types of Mexican food, but Sonoran Mexican food is probably my favorite Mexican food.

**Isaac:** I like L.A. Mexican food. It's good.

**Mark:** There's some good stuff but, like, even Phoenix, if I go up to Phoenix, once you get further north of a certain latitude, longitude—I'm not sure right now which one is north and south, or east and west—but the salsa turns into ketchup.

**Todd:** The further you get from the border—I don't know the mileage on it either—the worse it gets. I've had some horrible experiences in the Midwest with Mexican food. Just don't do it. Go somewhere else.

**Dick:** "Let's go get a burrito!... What the hell is this?"

**Todd:** What are your thoughts on Phoenix, compared to Tucson.

**Dick:** Phoenix is weird. It doesn't even seem like there really is any bands there, kind of.

**Mark:** Phoenix, in a lot of way besides even music, resembles L.A.

**Todd:** The worst parts, I would say. There are a lot of bad things about L.A., but there are a lot of good things.

**Mark:** Right. When I say that, I'm probably doing a disservice and I'm not thinking of the positive aspects of it, but I just mean in the music business, you don't usually think of L.A. in a good light.

**Todd:** Oh no—the music industry, absolutely not.

**Mark:** Phoenix is a lot of the same. Actually, a lot of the same people who used to live in L.A. live in Phoenix now. It's a big fucking exodus. So there are a lot of punk bands that are punk bands because they want to be Green Day and Rancid. "Hey, yeah, we can play punk and get on the radio!" I don't want to overstep my bounds but have a Volcom clothing line and... you know.

**Todd:** And have some shoes named after me.

**Dick:** Air Beefs. [laughs]

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**Todd:** I would buy Air Beefs, actually.

**Dick:** They're super wide. The laces are never laced. This ridiculous odor just wafting out of them—when they're brand new. [laughter]

**Todd:** Phoenix inherited two horrible things about Los Angeles: unmitigated sprawl and you have to get in your car to get to most places. And they totally destroyed or have taken out public transportation. Those are the two things that really bother me about Phoenix.

**Dick:** It's coming along. We're all bashing Phoenix. We're keeping the stereotype alive! Tucson and Phoenix hate each other, man!

**Mark:** That is a stereotype—that Tucson hates Phoenix and Phoenix hates Tucson.

**Ricky:** I love fucking Phoenix. I like going there at night and playing shows. But in the





*"Imagine a whole bunch of asses just shaking." That's the whole goal of the song.*

Dick: But it's a pool of male asses.

daytime, fuck Phoenix. It's hotter. [laughs]  
**Mark:** We're bashing on bands in Phoenix right now, but there are bands in Phoenix that I love and think are great and have the same sensibilities as us.

**Todd:** And Phoenix is a watershed. You don't think of Rumspringer as a Phoenix band, because they're from Coolidge, but they play in Phoenix or Mesa a lot.

**Mark:** Basically they are a Phoenix band because, although two of them used to live in Coolidge, they live in Phoenix now and they've been in Phoenix the entire time they've been in that band. And there are other great bands in Phoenix, too. Man Hands. Mangled Men. All of Ryan Rousseau's bands.

**Todd:** Digital Leather.

**Mark:** Only they're an Omaha band now?

**Todd:** Phoenix has triple the population of Tucson.

**Dick:** Yeah, and that's what is so weird about it. You'd think there would be so much. Maybe we're just totally missing the boat on it or something. It seems like if you have three times the people, there would be three times as many bands coming out of there.

**Mark:** I'm sure there is that stuff going on. We just aren't aware of it.

**Dick:** We're old dudes.

**Mark:** Yeah, we're old dudes, now. I'm sure house parties exist even in Tucson and bands are playing house parties but I'm not hearing about them because I'm forty-two. Fuck you. [laughter]

**Dick:** I love the looks when we play an all-ages place. And the younger kids are just like, "This is gonna be fucking terrible, man." And then they see John looking the Wolfman and shit.

**Mark:** Wasn't it at last Awesome Fest that someone thought me and John were bikers? "Why are those bikers here?"

**Dick:** Bouncers with beards.

**Todd:** People from across the country know Arizona now because of S.B. 1070. Have any of you or your immediate families been personally affected by it?

**Dick:** I've been deported a couple of times. [laughter]

**Todd:** Yeah, you're suspicious, Dick.

**Dick:** It's crazy; it's crazy.

**Mark:** You might have seen the movie *Born in East L.A.* [laughter]

**Todd:** Did Governor Jan Brewer actually say that teachers could not teach with anything except an "American accent"?

**Ricky:** I feel so embarrassed. That shit is fucking retarded.

**Todd:** I think the problem is it's so embarrassing because the majority of people I know that live in Arizona don't have a racist bone in their body.

**Ricky:** I don't even think of life that way. I'm a whole different fucking mindset and wavelength that I don't even think like that. I was like, "Really? Really?"

**Mark:** The problem is all that stuff is asinine and fucked up and stupid. But then, unfortunately, there are a lot of people on the other side who are just as fucking stupid. And I'm not talking about the people who are actually

affected by S.B. 1070, but there are a lot of groups.

There's a theater in Tucson, the Rialto Theater. The boycott happened then about S.B. 1070. Rise Against was with the boycott and now they're playing Phoenix in a month or something, because it's all over now. It's gone, right? That stuff doesn't exist anymore!

**Todd:** It's still on the books, my friend.

**Mark:** Right? Rialto is completely concerned with how it was affecting their business, and there were people who worked at Rialto who were causing a big huff and talking about it—who had never ever done anything about border policy or immigration or anything before that. They're just worried about their wallets. And they're limousine, fucking liberals. That kind of shit is just as dumb, in my eyes.

**Dick:** Vote Mark for mayor! [laughter] Well, the thing is we're all really super Republican, and it seemed like they pushed it a little bit too far. [laughs]

**Todd:** We're fiscally conservative, not socially conservative.

**Dick:** Very, very fiscally conservative and it just kind of messed with us. We're really pushing for strict rules and everything but I think they took it a little bit too far there with that one. [laughs]

**Mark:** The one thing for Arizona—the cops and everyone else are in charge of shit like that—are inept enough to not actually be causing situations that you were talking about. The policy and what our leaders are saying is fucking retarded and stupid, but, luckily, it's not trickling down to actually. I'm not saying it's not completely, but people are still going across the border.

**Dick:** Yeah, they're not eating faces down there yet. [laughter] That caused it. The S.B. 1070 caused that to happen.

**Todd:** I looked into Arizona's laws. This is a test: true law or not a true law? Is it on the books.

**Isaac:** It's illegal to give blowjobs in downtown Tucson.

**Todd:** I don't have that one. True or false: It is illegal to manufacture imitation cocaine?

**Mark:** I would guess, probably yes.

**Isaac:** I'm pretty sure it's illegal.

**Dick:** I really hope it's not illegal.

**Ricky:** ...That's how you make more money. [laughter]

**Todd:** Ricky is absolutely correct. It is illegal to make imitation cocaine.

**Dick:** Arg! We're out of that business. That's good.

**Todd:** A misdemeanor committed while wearing a red mask is considered a felony.

**Dick:** I hope so. I don't really like red. Screw those people. A misdemeanor committed while wearing a red mask is actually a felony?

**Mark:** I'm going to guess that's a false.

**Dick:** It sounds just crazy enough to be true, though. Yeah. It probably is. We live in a retarded state.

**Todd:** Yep, it's a felony.

**Dick:** I read something once that said it was illegal for women to wear jeans downtown or something like that.

**Todd:** It's illegal for women to wear jeans in Tucson. It's a Tucson city law.

**Dick:** Yeah, you hear that ladies? You hear that? Take 'em off! [laughter]

**Todd:** Okay, last one: Is it true that there is a law that states you may not have more than two dildos in a house?

**Dick:** Wah-oh?!

**Mark:** Yeah, that definitely was a real law, I remember. Yeah, it's still true.

**Dick:** What if it's a double-headed dildo?

**Todd:** As long as you don't cut it in half.

**Mark:** For a long time I thought it was any dildos, because I remember there was a big...

**Dick:** He kind of has a problem with dildos. [laughter]

**Mark:** Yeah. I don't like dildos. [laughter]

**Isaac:** He has too many of them.

**Mark:** You might have seen that intervention. [laughter]

**Isaac:** Mark's dildo intervention.

**Dick:** But if it's inside you, it's not *in* your house, right? [laughter] You hear the door and you're like "Ah! I've got to get these out of here! Ah!" [mimes sticking a dildo up himself] You open the door, "Whoa, what was that?!" "Can I help you with something?" "Aah... if this wasn't just a two-dildo town." It says that on the thing: "Tucson: a two dildo town." [laughter]

**Todd:** Yeah, they were all true.

**Dick:** That's crazy. I don't know where they get the red mask from.

**Mark:** It's probably from the old west, like bank robbers. Wearing a kerchief...

**Dick:** They had Bloods back then, dude? This is a Crip-friendly town. Tucson: We're Crip-friendly.

**Todd:** Is there a Mexican Mr. Rogers? Or when kids are growing up, how do they learn their manners? On television?

**Ricky:** My mom used to beat the shit out of me if I got it wrong. That's how. That's basically it.

**Todd:** That didn't go as well as I planned. You're familiar with *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*? Was there a Mexican version of it? Like in Nogales, a Univision thing?

**Ricky:** There were different shows, but there was a guy called Chabelo and every Sunday morning you would wake up to...

**Isaac:** Chabelo. [mimes Chabelo's voice] "Hey everybody!" This big guy dressed like a little boy and stuff, all fucking weird looking. He's funny.

**Ricky:** Topo Gigio.

**Isaac:** Topo Gigio, yeah. But he's Italian.

**Isaac:** I think they had *Sesame Street* in Spanish. When I was a kid—because my parents would work—my grandma would take care of me and all they would watch was novelas and stuff like that. That's kind of like Mr. Rogers, right? [laughter] [pause]

**Todd:** Yeah... kind of... the opposite.

**Dick:** A tumbleweed is going by outside right now. [whistles opening to *The Good, The Bad and the Ugly*] [laughter]

**Todd:** Ricky, do you know what Shimo means in Swahili?

**Ricky:** No.

**Todd:** It translates into "hole." What does it mean in Spanish?

**Ricky:** Well, it's short for Shimomoto, which is my maiden name. Japanese.



A black and white photograph of a man with dark, curly hair, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt. He is singing into a microphone and playing an acoustic guitar. His eyes are closed, and he has a focused expression. The background is dark with some out-of-focus lights.

*As long as my mom still  
loves me, and I get to smoke  
pot, I don't give a fuck.*

SHANTY CHERYL

Todd: Ricky is absolutely correct. It is illegal to make imitation cocaine.  
Dick: Arg! We're out of that business. That's good.



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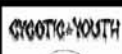
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It went off and shot me in the elbow. It was a 9mm Glock with hollow points. My elbow got blown out. I kept punching him until people dragged me off of him and took me to the hospital.

**Isaac:** His mother's maiden name, not his.

**Dick:** It's not a made-up name. It seems really made up.

**Ricky:** That's what they call me and my brothers my whole life. Shimo.

**Todd:** Your mother's Japanese?

**Ricky:** Half. And half Mexican.

**Todd:** Does she still live in Nogales?

**Ricky:** Yes, Nogales, Mexico.

**Todd:** Did she introduce you to music? Do you come from a musical family?

**Ricky:** Yeah, my whole family. I have my older brother. He had a glam/heavy metal band in Guadalajara, Mexico in the '80s. Exxus. I remember living with him. When he went to college, I was three or four. Every time he would come home for Christmas, he would just get into his room and listen to music. He was a rock star. I thought he was awesome. [proudly] "That's my brother..."

**Isaac:** Doing cocaine. [laughter]

**Ricky:** I have three other brothers. They are all also involved in music.

**Todd:** Have they heard Lenguas?

**Ricky:** Yeah, they like it.

**Isaac:** They go see us play sometimes.

**Todd:** Beef, you got stabbed outside of a Scared Of Chaka show...

**Mark:** I got shot. So, basically, I was hanging out with this girl. [looking at Isaac] Quotations? Quotations, "girl"?

**Isaac:** No, quotations, on the "hanging out" part. [laughter]

**Dick:** You took that to a whole different level.

**Mark:** Scared Of Chaka was playing at

our friend's house, which happened to be a house where Chad from The Blacks lived at the time with this other dude Matt and this dude Marco. And Chad was in Alaska at the time, fishing. Matt said that Scared Of Chaka could play there. Marco didn't know anything about it.

Scared of Chaka played. A bunch of people were there. There was a keg. Typical house party. Marco came home with his friend, Jeff. They didn't like Matt anyways and they came home to the party. Marcos started yelling at Matt, kind of pushing him around a little bit.

My friend, who I was hanging out with, Denise, was friends with Matt. She got in the middle of it 'cause she didn't want them beating her friend up. When she did that, the dude Jeff pushed her. I saw that he had a gun in the back of his pants and he kind of reached for it. So I pushed him and grabbed the gun at the same time; threw the gun across the room. He jumped on the gun. I jumped on him.

Struggled for the gun. He was trying to point it up at me. I was trying to keep it pointed down at him. It went off and shot me in the elbow. It was a 9mm Glock with hollow points. My elbow got blown out. I was punching him when I was on top of him when it happened. I kept punching him until people dragged me off of him and took me to the hospital.

He got charged with assault on Denise and that was it. Then he died maybe a year or more later. He drove his car into a telephone pole, then got a rental car and did the same

thing again. Accidentally. Just being fucked up on pills and alcohol.

Scared Of Chaka was there and I believe the quote was, "I have never seen a band pack up that fast, ever." [laughter]

**Dick:** I give people tours of that house. I live next door to that house right now, still. "This is where Mark got shot." Charge 'em five bucks. I have a little tape player with Scared Of Chaka playing.

**Todd:** I'm sorry. I don't know how to pronounce this: *Que Panchon*?

**Isaac:** It's a slang from Nogales. It means, *Que paso*? What's up? But we changed it to *panchon*—it means big fuckin' belly. Whenever we see our friends. "You're getting fatter."

**Todd:** And who is *La Llorona*?

**Isaac:** One of the old ghost stories—the lady who drowned her kids in the river or the lake and she was so sad that she killed herself.

**Todd:** What does that have to do with Lenguas Largas?

**Dick:** Because we're ghost rock. That's what it means.

**Mark:** It is a Mexican legend. It's what families use to scare their kids with to not wander off at night. If you wander off, this lady might come and grab you, thinking they're hers. It stemmed from Isaac telling me that back in high school and maybe before that—goths, people who really liked the Cure and shit like that—that's what they called 'em. *La Lloronas*. I thought that was funny.

**Dick:** We're goth kids, really.

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When I got into the hospital—in a week's time I lost ninety pounds... of just pure fluid.

*"If we go to the grocery store and we don't find any prune juice, we're taking you to the hospital."*

**Ricky:** Emo.

**Dick:** Nemo.

**Todd:** Fish punk. [laughter]

**Dick:** We totally are fish punk.

**Todd:** Beef, what happened to you on tour last time?

**Mark:** I had an irregular heartbeat for some reason. I don't know why. It was making me retain a bunch of fluid. It got to the point where it was really difficult for me to walk around, move, or do anything. When I got into the hospital—in a week's time I lost ninety pounds.

**Todd:** Holy moly.

**Mark:** Of just pure fluid. That's what that was and ever since that happened, I've been fine. They shocked my heart into a regular heartbeat and did some other tests. I've been taking some blood pressure medication. Low sodium diet.

**Todd:** That was during tour?

**Mark:** It was happening before tour, but while I was on tour, it got to the point where I was fuckin' miserable.

**Todd:** And you guys just dropped him off?

**Isaac:** He was like, "I'm fine! I'm fine!" "No you're not, dude."

**Mark:** Seriously, I thought I was backed up. I wanted to get prune juice.

**Todd:** His heart was constipated.

**Isaac:** "If we go to the grocery store and we don't find any prune juice, we're taking you to the hospital." We didn't find any prune juice. We took him to the hospital. That was good. Now he's back, baby.

**Todd:** I don't even care what your plans are. What are your goals for Lenguas Largas? What do you hope to accomplish?

**Isaac:** Right now, I just want to write as many songs as I can. It's never going to happen that I'm not going to not have a regular job. But I don't want to have a regular job. I work outside in the sun. I fuckin' hate it. I want to get paid to drink beer, smoke some joints, write music, and play music. It's not going to happen. I got to have a job so I can buy beer and weed.

**Todd:** Dickey, what are the returns for this band for you?

**Dick:** I would like to have another record, to just have. Even when you're an old man, you can pull out the records that you're on that have been put out and you can look at them. "Yeah." I just want to have fun.

**Isaac:** Rock'n'roll is the fountain of youth.

**Mark:** Basically, I want to record more records and play more shows. I just want to keep hanging out with these other idiots and have fun, touring around in a cramped-ass van and being hot and smelling each other's farts.

**Isaac:** And the jokes.

**Ricky:** Yeah, the same.

**Isaac:** "I want to smell other people's farts!"

**Ricky:** I just want the Air Beef to be true.

**Isaac:** Come out with designer shoes. Air Beef shoes.

**Dick:** Really, that's it?

# JAKE AUSTEN OF ROCTOBER

INTERVIEW BY  
RYAN LEACH

Photos courtesy of  
Jake Austen

Layout by  
Lauren Measure



Jake and his daughter Maiya.

For twenty years, Jake Austen has been the driving force behind *Roctober*. *Roctober* is a revered Chicago-based fanzine that focuses on obscure music and comics. The list of people interviewed for the zine spans the gamut—from the late Black Lone Ranger (James Ramsey), an African-American blues singer who modeled his life on TV's the Lone Ranger (played by Caucasian actor Clayton Moore), to underground rockabilly semi-legend Sleepy LaBeef. The zine boasts some of the best contributors around, including Austen, Phil Milstein, James Porter, Ken Burke, and John Battles. *Roctober* comes out twice a year. The zine recently celebrated the release of its fiftieth issue.

In addition to *Roctober*, Austen produces children's TV dance show *Chic-A-Go-Go* with the help of his wife Miss Mia, Jacqueline Stewart, and puppet Ratso. Inspired by late '60s Chicago dance show *Kiddie-A-Go-Go* (Phil Milstein interviewed the show's originators Jack and Elaine Mulqueen for *Roctober*), *Chic-A-Go-Go* has aired over six hundred episodes on CAN-TV (a Chicago Public Access channel). Austen also fronts the band the Goblins.

Austen is currently working on a book. His latest release, *Flying Saucers Rock 'N' Roll*, contains a collection of *Roctober* interviews and was released on Duke University Press.

# STARTING ZINES BACK THEN LARGELY REVOLVED AROUND HANGING OUT AT COPY SHOPS.

**Ryan:** What were you doing as a kid?

**Jake:** I grew up in an area with diversity. A lot of different kids went to school with me on the Southside (of Chicago). Some of the kids had grandfathers who played music in the old days. At that time in Chicago you'd get exposed to avant-garde music by mistake. People who were involved with the AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) would play neighborhood block parties. Oscar Brown Jr. would play children's events. Chicago was a good place to grow up. When I was a kid there was still a lot of independent TV production. Bozo the Clown was still on the air and so were other eccentrics. Local *Soul Train* was still on and you could catch local wrestling in the mornings on Channel 26.

**Ryan:** This was during the late '70s?

**Jake:** Yeah. I was a kid throughout the '70s. I went to high school in 1983.

**Ryan:** You attended Rhode Island School of Design where you started *Roctober* in 1992. What was starting a zine like at that time?

**Jake:** Kinko's was open twenty-four hours a day in a lot of places. You would just go in at night, and if there was someone that you knew who worked there, you could get free copies. People figured out different scams. Right around the time I started *Roctober*, Kinko's had just gotten these copy machines that had second and third inks; they allowed you to print in different shades of brown and red and that helped with layouts. Starting zines back then largely revolved around hanging out at copy shops. When I started *Roctober* in Rhode Island, it was a little different from Chicago. There were other people there creating zines, too. Shepard Fairey

would be at the same Kinko's. The Chicago Kinko's would be full of people doing church programs or do-it-yourself rap album covers. Bootleggers would be there too.

The Internet did not exist for regular people in the early '90s so mailorder was very big. Labels like Dischord relied on it. They would place giant broadsheets in zines and people would order directly from them. Zines were the same way. They would get listed in *Maximum Rocknroll* and *Factsheet Five*. R. Seth Friedman edited *Factsheet Five*. It was a thick magazine that gave reviews of fanzines and told you how to order them. *Factsheet Five* helped everybody. There was also a mainstream teenage girl magazine called *Sassy*. *Sassy* would have a zine-of-the-month feature. If your zine got picked, you got hundreds of orders. There were several avenues that helped zines out tremendously. There was a lot going on.

Anyone with a weird quirk was encouraged to start a zine. People were making zines about their neighborhoods. Highschool girls would write in to *Roctober* and I'd tell them to come up with a comic and I'd put it in the mag. We'd send these kids advice—like how to write dialogue in their comic books so it wouldn't get murky when you reduced them in size. It was community based. You became friends with people you'd never met in person.

**Ryan:** One of my favorite interviews you've done recently was with (Chicago White Sox organist) Nancy Faust. She ties in well with the general theme of *Roctober*. The zine covers people who generally work in a vacuum, often facing incredible odds.

**Jake:** When Nancy got the issue with her interview in it she was so pumped. She lives out past the suburbs and has a small farm. Nancy drew a picture of (*Chic-A-Go-Go* mascot) Ratso and took a photo of

her mule holding the drawing in his mouth. The drawing reads: "*Roctober* Kicks Ass." Nancy wrote me a letter saying she couldn't believe she was in the same issue as the Jim Osborne, who did some of the most depraved comics of the '60s. And we ran some of his stuff that included depictions of people skull fucking. To cover such a broad range of people in a single magazine was something Nancy picked up on and appreciated. No one had heard of Jim Osborne.

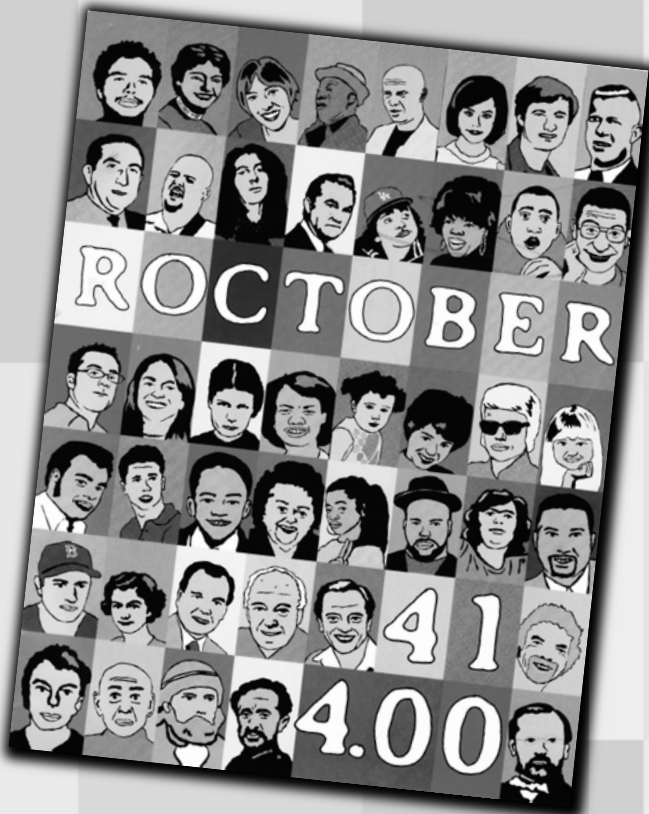
**Ryan:** It's the preservation of American culture. Nowadays, culture is treated as nothing more than a commodity.

**Jake:** Absolutely. Nancy is such a wonderful person. Half her Google searches are related to *Roctober*. It shouldn't be that way. She's such a legendary organist. The great thing about that article is that we asked her questions that she wouldn't typically be asked, like if she was in a garage band when she was a teenager in the '60s. We asked her about her mother's professional musical career. You figure out people's connections to the magazine.

**Ryan:** Unlike nearly all mainstream magazines, *Roctober* has lengthy word counts. Can you explain the importance of generous word counts?

**Jake:** Typically, when you write for a bigger magazine they'll tell you something like, "We'll give you fifteen hundred words for the interview you have planned." For them that's a lot of space. Nevertheless, you could be covering an incredibly fascinating person who deserves a lengthier interview and that's all you'll get. You can't really go in depth, on anything, with fifteen hundred words. I tell *Roctober* writers, "Hey, you can write as much as you want. If you're interviewing someone and they have something amazing to say, leave it in there." I really do encourage people to make pieces inviting. If a reader is intimidated by a piece because he thinks it's too long, that's his problem. If a reader is intimidated because the writer is being difficult or trying to be too clever, that's not what I'm looking for. A writer should get you really pumped up for an interview. She should explain why the interviewee is cool and worth covering.

Typically, *Rolling Stone* has just one long article per issue. Even the *New Yorker*, a magazine famous for its long articles, has been running shorter and shorter pieces. And you'd







Roctober #1

think that on the internet, where there's no cost involved in running lengthy pieces, that you'd get more of them. That's not the case. When you write professionally for a website, they almost always want short pieces.

**Ryan:** Ken Burke interviewed Billy Lee Riley for *Roctober*. Three quarters of the way through his interview I was convinced that it was the greatest Billy Lee Riley interview in print. That feeling was attributable to the high word count and Burke's deep knowledge of Riley's career. Burke was talking in depth about Riley's mid-'70s work. He wasn't focusing exclusively on his Sun Records years like so many others.

**Jake:** Billy Lee Riley isn't one of the most important artists of all time. However, whatever you can get out of him is worth preserving. He should be allowed to tell his story at length. Knowing the creative decisions he made is important. We should know what aspects of his career he felt were successful and which ones weren't. Billy Lee Riley's one of the most talented Sun artists. The fact that a lot of information on him wasn't available was a problem, so you want to give Riley and Ken (Burke) the space

needed to make it happen. It's a lot of work for the writer; imagine the time involved in the transcription. But it's rewarding. You're documenting history. Of course Billy died. And had Ken not spoken with Billy before he passed, that would have been a shame.

**Ryan:** I could tell Ken really knew his stuff when he asked Billy about (Sun Records pianist) Jimmy Wilson. He asks (Sun Records saxophonist) Martin Willis about Jimmy as well in a subsequent interview. Jimmy was sort of a peripheral figure at Sun—incredibly gifted but definitely out there. Billy reckons he was crazy. These are some of the only glimpses we'll get of the late Wilson.

**Jake:** There's great stuff in that Martin Willis interview that even the most obsessed Sun fans didn't know. That's a great interview.

**Ryan:** Where do you find writers for *Roctober*?  
**Jake:** People find you. I didn't know any of *Roctober*'s writers or cartoonists growing up. People tend to gravitate toward the magazine because of similar interests. John Battles, one of our main contributors, creates hand-drawn flyers for rockabilly and punk shows. He created a poster for Hasil Adkins' Chicago debut show. I used John's logo for

the Hasil Adkins piece James (Porter) and I did. I credited John for his work. When John saw the *Roctober* issue with his logo in it, he was won over because his work was credited. He's one of our main writers now. I met James (Porter) at a record store. He worked at the record store next door to the dog clinic I worked at. James mentioned that he was going to the Hasil Adkins show, so I told him to write about it for the magazine. That's how he started writing for the mag.

Going back to what we were talking about earlier; when *Roctober* started out twenty years ago there was a network of people creating zines. Phil Milstein writes for us. He's a fairly legendary zine writer. Phil came across *Roctober* and appreciated it, so he reached out. He got involved with the magazine because that's what Phil does. We're constantly looking for likeminded people.

**Ryan:** While the zine community is certainly still around, it doesn't feel as strong as it was twenty years ago. To create a magazine that publishes regularly for more than a few years—let alone two decades—defies the odds. Do you ever get overwhelmed by *Roctober*?

**Jake:** We used to come out with three issues a year. Now we're at two. There have been a couple of years where we've only done one issue. *Wax Poetics* has released fifty issues in ten years. Although it's a slicker magazine with a more built-in audience, I can talk with *Wax Poetics* writers for hours about music. They're able to publish more regularly because money is less of a problem. I don't want to change things with *Roctober* to make it easier for us. We're pretty set on just doing two issues per year.

**Ryan:** You handle distribution for *Roctober* yourself, correct?

**Jake:** Pretty much. There are distributors who take a couple hundred copies each in different regions. But no one is taking anywhere near a thousand copies. I don't have a bar code on the magazine. When you start working with big distributors, you're asked to make thousands of extra copies that you're likely not going to sell. I don't make enough money to do that and I can't go in debt. I basically try to have the ads pay for the printing of the magazine and the postage.

**Ryan:** Running a print zine might be something of a mystery to younger people who didn't live in a pre-Internet world.

**Jake:** Microcosm, which is in Indiana and Portland, is a zine publisher and distributor that's really into the purity of zines. I'm talking about handwritten, Xerox-looking zines. There's something great about that. It seems that Microcosm is doing okay. It's almost like they're trying to reject computers. I don't see that approach as the zine equivalent of a Civil War reenactment. It's a natural thing. It makes sense. The same thing applies to *Roctober*. Although we're a music magazine and we do use computers, I try to have as much of the shoddy, cut-and-paste feel of what I consider real zines.

**Ryan:** Without having to typeset!

**Jake:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Todd (Taylor, *Razorcake* head honcho) uses the *Razorcake* website as a tool to help the magazine and as another outlet to spread knowledge of underground music. I think that's a pretty good way to go about it. One doesn't have to subsume the other.

**Jake:** The Internet is fantastic, although it makes discovery a little less exciting. One of the great things about *Roctober* is covering someone who's *not* on the Internet. That's hardcore.

**Ryan:** *Chic-A-Go-Go* was inspired by a late '60s Chicago-based TV dance show, correct?

**Jake:** Yeah. Phil Milstein had interviewed Jack and Elaine Mulqueen. They hosted a show called *Kiddie-A-Go-Go*. Phil's article ran in *Ugly Things* and *Roctober*. Phil couldn't go to the Mulqueen's house because he lives in New England, so he asked me to do some footwork for him; could I visit Jack and Elaine out in the suburbs and go through their archives? Of course. It was a nice visit. Phil was actually the first one to show me footage of the *Kiddie-A-Go-Go* show. It was amazing. It was incredible to see little kids dancing. It had all the elements of a great dance show, but had the added bonus of kids just being kids—having fun and being free and wild. It was almost like seeing midgets dance. It was like they were trying to be teenagers on a typical dance show, but they were the wrong size. It was really exciting. What was really cool about Phil's interview with the Mulqueens is that we included a sidebar from people who had been on the show as kids.

**Ryan:** Starting a dance show for kids—that sounds like something people would talk about doing but never follow up on. You and Miss Mia (Jake's wife) run the shows on public access. How did you get it going? One of the first episodes contained a Monks interview.

**Jake:** The Monks interview happened because of *Roctober*. At the beginning, we were working ridiculously hard because we didn't know what we were doing. Now I can prepare a show in an hour, especially using the internet. People ask to be on the show now. One of the few things I do well is following through on ideas. I'm definitely a jack of all trades kind of guy. The only thing I can master is the follow through.

**Ryan:** When you approach people to be on *Chic-A-Go-Go* who are unfamiliar with the program, do you find it hard to explain the concept of the show to them?

**Jake:** No. It's almost the opposite. Everybody wants to do it. Once they find out what it's about, they typically get excited. We go to music festivals and send out e-mails saying, "We'd like to interview you for our show using a puppet named Ratso and then have a bunch of kids dance to your song." The only people who are going to say "no" are people who are completely humorless, are too big to do something like that, or they can't work it in their schedule. Who doesn't want to do something like that? Bands love it, too. How often do they get to lip synch to their own songs? It's something you never get to do.

**Ryan:** You used to be forced to do it back in

the '60s. Bands on *The Lawrence Welk Show* would play without their guitars plugged in.

**Jake:** That's right.

**Ryan:** Was there ever a person you wanted to track down for *Roctober* or *Chic-A-Go-Go* but just couldn't get?

**Jake:** For *Chic-A-Go-Go* there was: Alvin Cash. Alvin Cash had a million-seller called "Twine Time." He released dozens of records and each one revolved around a dance. Alvin wasn't that talented. He was just a weirdly lucky guy. Andre Williams wrote some of his songs. Alvin couldn't really sing; he'd mostly just talk on his records. But he made more dance records than anyone else. I would see Alvin at this blues club called the Checkerboard Lounge all the time. I had his phone number. But he was just a little too drunk and weird at the clubs. I had even discussed being on the show with him. Every month when we were going to do *Chic-A-Go*, I'd say, "Okay, we've got to get Alvin on the show." But there was something about his drinking and weirdness—I didn't know if I'd have the energy to deal with him so I kept putting it off.

Then I heard that he died. I was hoping that it wasn't true. It wasn't in the papers and the internet wasn't around. So I called up his number and his wife answered. She asked if I had gone to the funeral. I told her no. She said, "You should've been there. Music was playing, people were dancing—that shit was happening." She talked about how awesome it was. I talked with people later on who went and, apparently, it was a wild, great funeral. But not having Alvin on the show sucked. I could've done it, but I never had the energy because I thought he was going to be a little bit of work. Now when I have a number, I try to act immediately. I tell my writers that, too. I would have liked to have had Poly Styrene on *Chic-A-Go-Go* or *Roctober*, but her interviews aren't great. I just read a recent interview with her conducted about a year before she died and I doubt we could have done better.

**Ryan:** You're preserving Chicago's musical culture. Have you gotten any support from public institutions or are you still working too far out on the margins?

**Jake:** The city keeps firing and hiring people

from their cultural/arts centers—even the names of the institutions keep changing. They're aware of *Chic-A-Go-Go*. The city historian has utilized me to find stuff. Fortunately, we had Don Cornelius out here in Chicago a year before he died. It was for a *Soul Train* tribute. I helped with uncovering archival material and with programming the event. Every once in a while we'll get something like that, but it'd be great to get some grants for our research. The city is aware of us and doesn't view us as pests, but as people serious about documenting the music of Chicago.

**Ryan:** In the spirit of *Chic-A-Go-Go*, what messages do you have for young people interested in starting a zine? Is a blog a great way to start out and spread awareness of what you're doing?

**Jake:** A blog can be helpful. You get better at writing and interviewing people through practice. There are no two ways about it. The more you do it, the better you get. And feedback on your work is good, too. If you're doing comics—it's great to print your work. Even if you just Xerox them and bring them around. Comics do not work that well on the internet. It's hard to do a print zine if you don't appreciate print. People still read magazines. Newspapers are having a harder time. My advice is to think about what you like in magazines and use that as inspiration. Just practice—and actually make a joke book, a comic, or a manifesto. Although the internet is cool, there's nothing like holding a zine in your hands. There's something wonderful about a print run, even if you only create ten copies.

**Ryan:** You recently released a *Roctober* collection called *Flying Saucers Rock 'n' Roll* through Duke University Press. What was the process like?

**Jake:** It was a very slow process. An academic press moves much slower than a commercial press. They do peer reviews. Peer reviewing goes like this: a university will send out your manuscript to a bunch of secret readers who then write responses to the book. I had to change some things. I handed them the manuscript and it came out two years later.

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**Ryan:** I had no idea it took that long. You had a lot of *Roctober* interviews to pull from. Were you in control of the content?

**Jake:** I was in control of the content. There was one part of the book that was weaker than I thought it was. The peer reviewer picked up on it. Reading it over, I could see where they were coming from. I was in the room when the interview took place so I could feel the energy that didn't transfer on to the page. That was for the Sugar Pie DeSanto piece, so I had James (Porter) go back and interview her, and the piece became really solid. I also wrote a response to one of the critiques where I defended my writer. The people at Duke told me it was one of the best peer review responses they had gotten. But on other things they were correct and we fixed some things.

The process was great, though. The guy who acquires books for Duke University was in my neighborhood. He was one of the first rap DJs in Chicago on WHPK, the same community radio station that I work at now. He was aware of *Roctober* through the radio station. To be honest, we had dinner with him and he was trying to coax my wife, who's a revered scholar, to do a book with him. Sort of offhandedly he said, "Well, maybe we should do a *Roctober* book." Like I said, when I say I'm going to do something I usually follow through.

**Ryan:** *Roctober*, *Chic-A-Go-Go*, and your band The Goblins must take up almost all of your time. How do you get by?

**Jake:** I've got a book coming out on a major press later this year. There's a little

bit of money to be made off of that. I've got a couple of other books. I do freelance reviews for cash. It's something different every month. Somebody is doing a documentary on *Chic-A-Go-Go* that I had to do a ton of legwork for. They received a grant and I got a piece of that for all of my work. That will pay my car bill next month. It's just hustling. Every day is busy. I have two kids too, so I watch them from when they get home till dinner.

**Ryan:** Issue fifty of *Roctober* just came out. You've got a book on the way. What else is coming up?

**Jake:** Right now, I'm still working on sending out all the copies of issue number

fifty. Money has been a little tight. That's weighing me down. There were so many weird typos in the issue because it was so huge and overwhelming. I got some nice feedback from people about how issue fifty was looking back but also forward with the new interviews that were included. I'm actually really excited about the next issue. The old issues were fun to scan and go through, but I'm anxious to tackle new stuff at pace that won't wipe me out.

# I'M DEFINITELY A JACK OF ALL TRADES KIND OF GUY. THE ONLY THING I CAN MASTER IS THE FOLLOW THROUGH.

[www.roctober.com](http://www.roctober.com)



*Chic-A-Go-Go* in full swing.



# TOP FIVES

## RAZORCAKE

**Aphid Peewit**

- Akutt Innleggelse, *Echoes from the Asylum 7"*
- Teenage Bottlerocket, *Freak Out!* CD
- Roscoe Holcomb, *Untamed Sense of Control* CD
- *Bloodied but Unbowed*, DVD
- *Literary Outlaw: The Life & Times of William S. Burroughs* (book)

**Art Ettinger**

- Vibram 94, *You'll Never Take Us 7"*
- Fang, *Here Come the Cops* CD
- Down By Law, *Champions at Heart* CD
- Iron City Hooligans, Self-titled CD
- The Briefs, *Singles Only* Box Set

**Bill Pinkel**

- Neon Piss, Self-titled LP
- B-Lines, Self-titled LP
- White Wires, *III* LP
- The Libyans, live at the Highland Park American Legion Hall.
- Future Virgins, live at the Blue Star, and everything they have, or will ever record.

**Candice Tobin**

- White Lung, *Sorry* LP
- Something Fierce, *Don't Be So Cruel* LP
- Swing Ding Amigos, *Kings of Culo* LP
- Blood Buddies, Self-titled 7"
- Audacity, *Mellow Cruisers* LP

**Chris Mason**

1. Daylight Robbery, *Ecstatic Vision* LP
2. White Wires, *III* LP
3. Crusades, *Parables 7"*
4. Neon Piss, Self-titled LP
5. Ty Segall Band, *Slaughterhouse* LP

**Craven Rock**

1. Me and my friend's website: drunk-reviews.com (It looks shitty now, but it's funny. Bookmark it!)
2. Olytopia Camp at Autonomous Mutant Festival

3. My friend Amina Foxdye for being inspiring.
4. *Ghetto Physics* (movie)
5. Short stories (reading and writing)

**Daryl Gussin**

- Young Guv & The Scuzz, *A Love Too Strong* 12"EP
- Spent Flesh, Self-titled 10"
- Cruddy, *Negative World* LP + live
- Them Martyrs, *Wretched* 12"EP
- The Intelligence, *Everybody's Got It Easy but Me* CD, tie with Riverboat Gamblers, *The Wolf You Feed* CD

**Replay Dave**

- Royal Headache, Self-titled LP
- Plastic Cross, *Grayscale Rainbow* LP
- Rose Cross, *Haunted House 7"*
- Black Wine, *Hollow Earth* LP
- White Wires, *III* LP

**Dave Williams**

1. No Weather Talks, *More Passion, Less Paycheck* EP
2. Asile, *Kichesippi Toxique* LP
3. Wonk Unit, *Trolleys Thankyou / Wonk Unit Saved My Life* CD
4. Bridges Left Burning, *Disappointment, Disapproval, Disbelief* EP
5. Homewrecker, *Worms & Dirt* LP

**Denise Depaolo**

*Five Great Bands in Sioux Falls, SD Right Now*

- The Amidon Affair
- Roman Ships
- Talk Rock
- Damn Your Eyes
- Southmouth

**Designated Dale**

1. Cudzoo & The Faggettes, *Daddy Issues* CD. Female-fronted, filthy-mouthed, NYC switchblade rock'n'roll is back, and it never sounded better.
2. Hollywood Hate playing semi-regularly again, complete with OG lineup (!). Don't blow it a second time if you missed 'em live the first time 'round!
3. The Gears at Alva's in San Pedro 6/09/12—film footage was shot for

an upcoming Gears documentary, to be edited in alongside some *Decline*-era Gears film. Looking way forward to this.

4. Yvonne's birthday week in Chicago during the last week of June. Not only did I get to vaca with my wife and visit with lot of her awesome familia, but was fortunate enough to catch an Arrivals gig the day we touched down at Reggie's. Rock.
5. Mylo The Cat on YouTube. My favorite new cantankerous tabby from the East Coast tells it like it is.

**Ever a.k.a. The Girl About Town**

1. The Jesus and Mary Chain at Hollywood Park
2. Jimmy Cliff at Hollywood Park
3. X at Hollywood Park
4. Redd Kross at the Roxy
5. Tijuana Panthers at the Roxy

**Gabe Rock**

*Top 5 Things in Fives*

1. 5 Shows That Made Me Cry: Archers Of loaf, Billy Bragg, Tiltwheel, Arcade Fire, Cocksparrer
2. 5 Punkhouses That Rule: Party Island (PDX), FBK (Seattle), Alamo [RIP] (MPLS), 131 Tompkins (Brooklyn), Thrillhouse (SF)
3. 5 Foods: pizza, bagels, ham, cheese, dude toast!
4. 5 Comics: Doug Stanhope, *Hey Wait* by Jason, *Fear Agent*, Alan Moore, yusuke1234 tumblr
5. Reasons to Live: Hope, sex, being dead sucks, farts, Mexico, and cartoons are tied.

**Garrett Barnwell**

1. High On Fire, *The Art of Self Defense* CD reissue
2. NOT YET!, *It's a Small World, Alcohol* cassette
3. Anarchus, *Final Fall of the Gods* cassette
4. Tragedy, *Darker Days ahead* CD
5. Mahavishnu Orchestra, *Birds of Fire* CD

**Jeff Proctor**

*Top 5 Reasons Johnny Rad Fest Rules the Summer*

1. Mark Sultan
2. Nobunny
3. Shannon And The Clams
4. King Tuff
5. Audacity

**Front Row Joe Dana**

- F.Y.P, The Phuzz, and Rumspringer at the Metaphor Cafe
- French Exit, Madison Bloodbath, Murderburgers, Future Virgins, Toys That Kill, and Dear Landlord at Blue Star
- The Mormons and Kids Of Widney High at the Blue Star
- Dopamines and Teenage Bottlerocket at the Troubadour
- Hands Like Bricks, Dudes Night, Red City Radio, and French Exit on my birthday at the Blue Star (Thanks to Harry Jerkface for letting us squeeze in.)

**Juan Espinosa**

- No Statik, *"Never Be a Martyr"* b/w *"Earhammer Soundsystem"* 7"
- Bone Awl / Ashdautas, *Split* LP
- Toys That Kill, *Fambly 42* LP
- Perfume River, *No Wind* cassette
- *Bloody Ways* zine issues 1 and 2

**Katie Dunne**

*Top Five Things I Want for My Birthday*

1. Tickets to see Louis C.K.
2. A RepRap Medusa
3. Tuition to attend Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts
4. 40s to be legal in Alabama
5. P.J. Harvey to write a memoir

**Keith Rosson**

*Five Items That Ruled While Doing a Reading/Acoustic Tour with the Taxpayers*

1. Josh Trimble hilariously and way too dramatically narrating a book on tape of Zane Gray's 1923 novel *Tappan's Burro*, in which people frequently "ejaculate," rather than "exclaim" or "shout."
2. Swimming in the ocean in San Clemente and San Diego. Thanks, Marty!
3. Cosmo the Dog.
4. Camping in the Mt. Shasta National Forest.
5. Getting absolutely devastated by other readers at the shows, like Brenna in Santa Cruz, and Matthew Hart and Todd in L.A.

**Ken Cheppaikode**

- Primitive Hearts 7"
- Lost Sounds, *Lost* LP
- Youthbitch LP
- Young Guv And The Scuzz 12"
- Piss Test

# Quitting my job.

**Kevin Dunn**

1. The Arrivals, *Volatile Molotov* (in constant rotation since 2010)
2. Johnny Burnette, *Tear It Up: The Complete Legendary Coral Recordings*
3. Only Fumes and Corpses, *Selfish Act I*
4. *The Nostalgia Echo* by Mickey Hess (book)
5. Pussy Riots' closing statements

**Kurt Morris**

- Baroness, *Yellow + Green*
- Burning Love, *Rotten Thing to Say*
- Strand Of Oaks, *Dark Shores*
- *Natural Disaster* by Al Burian (book)
- 12XU, *Les Grandes Marees*

**Marcus Solomon**

*Top Five Songs off the Top of My Head*

1. Melvins, "National Hamster"
2. Aggression, "Dear John Letter"
3. Smut Peddlers, "Buck Naked on a Big Wheel"
4. The Pixies, "Hey"
5. Narcoleptic Youth, "Headcase"

**Mark Twistworthy**

- Muhammadali LP
- White Wires, *III* LP
- Hellshovel, *Hated by the Sun* CD
- Blur, *21* box set
- The curry chips from The Fish Wife in Cork, Ireland!

**Marty Play**

- Future Virgins at Blue Star, Los Angeles
- Signals Midwest at VLHS, Pomona
- Red City Radio (twice) at VLHS, Pomona
- Taking The Taxpayers to Pedro's Burritos, San Clemente
- The Murderburgers, *How to Ruin Your Life* LP

**Matthew Hart**

*Top 5 Punk Songs about Drugs*

1. The Simpletones, "I Like Drugs"
2. The Ramones, "Carbona Not Glue"
3. Bloodbath And Beyond, "Adderall You Can Eat"
4. Johnny Thunders And The Heartbreakers, "One Track Mind"
5. Descendents, "Coffee Mug"

**Mike Bruno**

1. Muhammadali, Self-titled 12"
2. Go Sell Drugs, *In Hades* songs
3. White Lung, *Sorry* LP
4. Ty Segall, *Slaughterhouse* 2x10"
5. Swearin', Self-titled LP

**Mike Frame**

1. Chelle Rose, *Ghost of Browder Holler* CD
2. Hangmen, *East of Western* CD
3. Saint Vitus, *Lillie F-65* CD
4. Testament, *Dark Roots of Earth* CD
5. Biters, live and recorded

**Mor Fleisher-Leach**

*Top 5 Texas Bands for Those Who Have Never Been to Texas*

1. 13th Floor Elevators
2. Golden Boys
3. The Huns
4. Red Krayola
5. The Bobby Fuller Four

**Nardwuar**

1. *Destroying Everything... Seems like The Only Option*, photo book by Ricky Adam
2. *Equalizing X Distort* zine (Every month has incredible punk rock interviews!)
3. *Fluke* Fanzine
4. Galactic Zoo Dossier
5. *Ugly Things* Magazine (Loved the Love feature)

**Nick Toerner**

- Billy Raygun, Self-titled CD
- Dopamines, *Vices* LP
- Delay, *Rushing Ceremony* LP
- Various Artists, *The Thing That Ate Larry Livermore* LP
- White Walls, Kevin, *The Magnum Opus* LP

**Nighthawk**

- Dude Jams and Cool Mutants at Chill Dawg Cove, St. Louis, July 4
- Nato Coles at Chill Dawg Cove, St. Louis, July 20
- Interviewing The Bouncing Souls
- Tight Bros and Rad Company at Lemmons, St. Louis, August 9
- Nato Coles And The Blue Diamond Band at Blank Space, St. Louis, August 13

**Paul Comeau**

1. Verse, *Bitter Clarity Uncommon Grace* LP
2. No, *Can You Dig it?* LP
3. Wasteland, Self-titled LP
4. Bad Doctors, The, *Distractions* 12" EP
5. Give, "Flowerhead" b/w "Kiss the Flame" 7"

**Ranae Hummel**

- Moving out of the Hood Soundtrack*
- Every Time I Die, *Ex Lives* ("Get me out of here" music)
  - Sam Cooke, "Twistin' the Night Away" ("Party while I pack" music)

- Toys That Kill, *Famby 42* ("Bee-Boppin into my new place" music)
- The National, *Boxer* ("Hammock/poolside relaxin'" music)
- Ramones ("Will Dale run out like kid after an ice cream truck" drive-by music)

**Rene Navarro**

1. Bio Crisis, *En Memoria Al Dolor* CD
2. Big Boys, *Fun Fun Fun* EP
3. Black Flag, *Jealous Again* EP
4. God Equals Genocide, *Rattled Minds* CD
5. DFMK pulling off a national Mexican tour!

**Rev. Nørh**

- Impo & The Tents, *Don't Give Me Your Number 7"* EP
- Brothers Gross, *Get Soaked* LP
- Flesh Lights, *Muscle Pop* LP
- Shambles, *Hello Baby* ((reissue)) 45
- MOTO, *Bolt!* ((reissue)) LP

**Ryan Horky**

1. Bukkake Boys, Self-titled LP
2. Mixtapes, *Even on the Worst Nights* LP
3. Paul Simon, *There Goes Rhym'n' Simon* LP
4. White Wires, *III* LP
5. BerT, *Monsterbook* LP

**Sal Lucci**

*Top 5 Albums That Helped Me Power Through My Move*

1. Church Keys, *Work with It!*
2. Monks, *Black Monk Time*
3. Oblivians, *Popular Favorites*
4. Mikal Cronin, *Is It Alright*
5. Simon And Garfunkel, *Collected Works*

**Sean Koepenick**

*Top 5 MP3 Downloads I Have Enjoyed After Paying for Them Legally*

1. Screem, *Fumble / Banging the Drum* (to replace my tape)
2. Loaded, *Dark Days* bonus edition (extra live set added with Stooges covers)
3. Johnette Napolitano, *Sketchbook 2* (When is the next solo record?)
4. Chris Mars, *When I Fall Down* (single—benefit for Slim Dunlap)
5. Toy Cannons, *Ice Age* (single—featuring Peter Cortner of Dag Nasty)

**Steven Hart**

- Upcountry Dirtbags (baseball team)
- My kids
- Killing Joke, *Down by the River*
- Men Without Hats, *Love in the Age of War*
- *The Other F Word* (movie)

**Tim Brooks**

- White Lung LP
- Hard Skin
- Cowboy Killers, *Press and Run Like Hell*
- Never Healed LP
- The Witch box set

**Toby Tober**

*Top 5 Movies I Have Recently Enjoyed*

1. *Bullhead*
2. *Ted*
3. Kavasikajuttu—*The Punk Syndrome*
4. *A Bag of Hammers*
5. *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth*

**Todd Taylor**

- *Office Girl* by Joe Meno (book)
- Hickey, The Naked Cult Of, *Various States of Disrepair; Complete Works 1994-'97* 2 x LP
- Young Guv & The Scuzz, *A Love Too Strong* 12"EP
- Ty Segall Band, *Slaughterhouse* LP
- Future Virgins, live tie with Taxpayers acoustic, Keith Rosson, and Matthew Hart reading
- English Singles, *Disaster 7"EP*
- Riverboat Gamblers, *The Wolf You Feed* CD

**Tommy Vandervort**

1. The Slow Death, *Born Ugly Got Worse*
2. God Equals Genocide, *Rattled Minds*
3. Neon Piss LP
4. Pu\$\$y-Cow, *Drinky Birds* CD and my new shirt (thanks Joe D.)
5. Canadian Rifle at Crown Tap Room, tie with Greg Cartwright at Double Door

**Ty Stranglehold**

1. Night Birds and Big Eyes in Victoria
2. Low Culture 7"
3. Big Eyes, *Back from the Moon 7"*
4. Siren Songs
5. Elise and I booked and going to Awesome Fest 666.

**Vincent Battilana**

- Adrian & Daryl's wedding reception
- Quitting my job
- Starting law school
- Future Virgins three nights in a row
- Moving away from dry, triple-digit summer heat





#### 10¢ FUCK FLICKS:

##### ***Eight Songs about Drugs and Sex! 7"***

Straight-up, grain alcohol-pounding punk rock'n'roll that pumps the blood of the same vein per The Candy Snatchers, Pleasure Fuckers, Nomads, Temporal Sluts, and hints of The Cramps. Admirers of said bands will find this EP a fitting addition to their turntables, and with the two bonus tracks that can be had with the included digital download card, everyone's a happy fucking camper. —Designated Dale (Drug Front)

#### 12XU: *Les Grandes Marées*. CD / LP

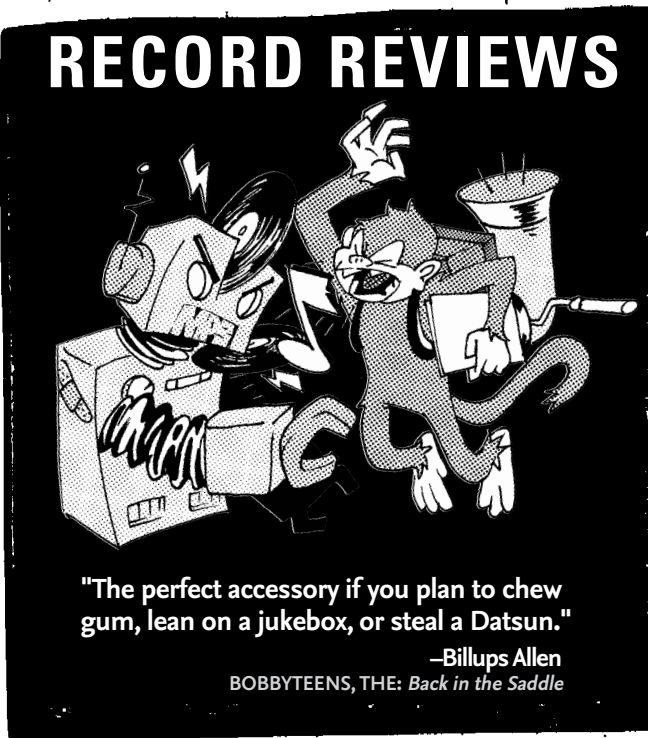
I have always appreciated when bands whose mother tongue is not English perform their music in that primary language. I usually have no interest in figuring out what they're saying, but instead find the vocals to act as an instrument, becoming another tone. France's 12XU provides the right vocal sound (utilizing two vocalists) to compliment their punky emo pop stylings. And it does so quite well—energetic when need be, passionate where appropriate, but always right on the money. The music is generally fast (eleven songs in twenty-five minutes) but not reckless. It's catchy and fun but not irreverent. I'd heard some songs by 12XU on previous seven inches but this full-length is far superior to any of that. There may be a part of me that is unable to completely relate to it since it's being sung in French, thus, it may never be my favorite album, but I still can't deny it's a fun, endearing listen and therefore comes recommended. —Kurt Morris (Bakery Outlet)

#### 2009: *Stuck in the Paste*. 7"

This record sounds like it was recorded on a 4-track. Very low quality. Which normally isn't that bad of a thing, but it's hard to make out what's going on with some of these songs. One of them is an acoustic number which made me feel really depressed. Side B is really slow and made me anxious to put on another record. There's no info on these guys. Just lyrics are included, and they didn't get me very excited. —Nighthawk (No Breaks)

#### 2ND DISTRICT: *The Love Has Gone*. 7"

Weird female-sounding male vocals permeate this neat-o gloomy German outfit that self-describes as "glam punk." Both of the two songs included on this single rip in the best possible ways. There's certainly a very new wave-y feel to 2nd District, particularly with the vocals. An associated music video I checked out online had me laughing out loud, but 2nd District is kind of awesome despite their goofiness. I



won't be donning any eyeliner when I go out tonight, although this record had me at least *consider* doing so. —Art Ettinger (Wanda)

#### ABOLITIONIST / FOOLS RUSH: *Split*. 7"

Abolitionist: Fuck yeah! Remember how good Propagandhi was before they became a metal band? Well, Abolitionist reminds me a lot of that. This song is a bit less blatantly political (no "stick the fucking flag up your ass" moments) and the guitar work is a bit less complicated, but Abolitionist's delivery is urgent and honest. This song is great. Fools Rush: I'm not at all opposed to wearing your influences on your sleeve, but, fuck, it's like the guys took a photocopy machine to Against Me!'s first few records with this song. I'd be willing to give them another chance, but this song did not make a fan out of me. —Chris Mason (1859)

#### ABORTTI 13: *Ulos!!*. LP

Abortti 13 is one of my favorite bands these days; the kind where when I see their records I start to get all sweaty and anxious; feeling like everything needs to come to a halt that very moment so we can put their latest record on and give a few spins. When I saw this LP, the room started to spin. All rational thinking went straight out the window. I get home and put it on. So far so good.

On par with their other releases (splits with Sekaanus, and Pyhäkoulu, and their *Viimeinen Verilöyly* EP. The rap bit at the end of "Vapaus" doesn't work, but maybe that's a matter of opinion. It just sounds out of place. Other than that, this is a pretty consistent ripper. My favorite song on here is "Psykopaatti" which has a death rock vibe at the beginning with the organ and somewhat creepy guitar intro. Then it cruises into a catchy mid-tempo song that's a nice change of pace among all the slightly speedier, straight-ahead numbers. Abortti 13 is a hardcore punk band from Finland who started in the early 1980s and still manages to have the sound and energy of that time thirty years later. No easy task! Skip the latest hype band from whatever hyped scene. Get this instead. —M.Avrq (Killer, killerrecordsfinland.com)

#### ACE HIGH CUTTHROATS: *Black Fire*. CD

The first song on this album is nearly five minutes long. It dangerously toes that thin line between "hard rock" and punk. Thankfully, things pick up a little after that—there's still some pretty overwhelming Heartbreakers/glam elements going on, but at the very least the songs start landing in the two to three minute mark. It's still kind of, you know, self-aggrandizing and excessive and maybe a little wanky, but shit, this type of music is built on

excess and wankery. They actually remind me quite a bit of Kansas City's Architects, who did a great album called *Vice* a few years back. That one's just such a gleefully unabashed stomping, swaggering rock record—and I feel like Ace High Cutthroats are edging into that same area, but their chops just aren't quite up to snuff yet. But a promising debut for sure. —Keith Rosson (Ace High Cutthroats)

#### ACxDC: *He Had It Coming and The Second Coming*. 7" EP

A couple o' reissues here: *He Had It Coming* was originally released in 2005 and *The Second Coming* apparently first saw the light of day in 2011. The music is of the grind/power violence extreme of the hardcore genre, with blurring beats, screaming fetus vocals, and smart, sarcastic lyrics that address wider concerns about religion and the dumbing down of America via short blasts about Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, *Jersey Shore*, and dead sitcom characters. Both are on colored vinyl. —Jimmy Alvarado (To Live A Lie)

#### ADAPTIVE REACTION:

##### ***Scream the First Few Bars and Family Entertainment*. 7" EP, CD**

Weird mix here of punk, goth (?), synth rock, and maybe a little psychedelic rock. At times they sound like an almost punkier Chrome, especially on "Suffragette," but too often the results sound like they land just shy of the sweet spot, especially when the male vocalist's growl takes center stage. *Family Entertainment* collects the four tracks from the EP with those from two other EPs, plus some unreleased ditties, some of which have a sort of drum-machine-techno-punk hybrid to the mix of styles. —Jimmy Alvarado (Adaptive Reaction)

#### ADULTS, THE: *Say Hello*. CD

Modern pop punk addressing more—ahem—adult concerns than the usual farting/girlfriend/vapid shit that plagues this pigeonhole. Ain't my preferred cup o' poison, but the songs are tight, catchy 'n' not embarrassing. —Jimmy Alvarado (The Adults)

#### ANARCHUS:

##### ***Final Fall of the Gods*. Cassette**

Six tracks of fairly brutal grindcore from South Florida. The performance is just loose and ragged enough to keep things interesting, which at times reminds me of Void, oddly enough. The vocalist sounds like he just ate a beer bottle which is also pretty cool. You can tell these kids are excited about what they are doing which really translates into this tape being a total keeper. —Garrett Barnwell (Rigid)

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RAZORCAKE 78

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**ANTIISEN: *New Blood*: CD**

I've been singing ANTIISEN's praises since becoming a fan in the early 1990s and will continue to do so. 2013 will mark their *thirtieth* year, which is no small shakes for a band of any genre, let alone one that formed during hardcore's heyday. Staying true to form after three full decades, ANTIISEN retains their unique sound, playing Ramones-influenced punk through heavily distorted guitars, with a pinch of country and hardcore thrown into the mix. This thirteen-song collection was released in conjunction with their 2012 European tour and it collects songs from various singles from the last few years. Their current lineup is as good or better as any they've had, with their live shows consistently kicking ass. My favorite of the original songs included here is the instant classic "Curses," with covers of the Ramones hit "Chainsaw" and the traditional tune "Black Eyed Susie" being two of the other standout tracks. ANTIISEN fans will love this album, as will anyone willing to give them a chance. Always prolific, especially in terms of putting out 7"s, how many more ANTIISEN releases will emerge in their upcoming fourth decade as a band? Bring them on! —Art Ettinger (Switchlight, switchlight-records.com)

**APERS, THE: *Live at the Eldorado*: CD**

The Apers have been around forever, pumping out their brand of Screeching Weasel worshipping punk rock with a European twist for years. This record was recorded live, something that I

must admit I'm not a huge fan of. All of the stereotypical trappings of a live record are here. They end up coming off either insincere, forced, or both. Those complaints aside, if you're a fan of the band already, you may really enjoy this, as they are competent at what they do and the sound from the live show is good. Fans of The Queers, Screeching Weasel, and other snotty juvenile pop punk bands take note. —Mark Twistworthy (Asian Man)

**ARRESTUM: *Ihmistietee*: 7" EP**

Loud 'n' rambunctious crust punk from Finland. They keep the most overt metal and Discharge influences more or less at bay while retaining the propulsion and dark theatricality that comes from the best parts of both those influences. —Jimmy Alvarado (Parta, partarecords.com)

**AUSHWITZ RATS: *Demo*: CD**

Why is it that a majority of the time I like a band so much more if I do not understand the language. Snob? Yes, sometimes. This is the case here with this band from Poland. To me, and I could easily be wrong, but they remind me of bands like Total Chaos, the Casualties, and bands on the Punk Core label. Those bands, I would be biased on immediately and probably write them off before listening. But the appeal of music from afar grabs my attention. At first listen here, gravelly vocals over melodic mid-tempo street punk is what these ears experience. Gang choruses that bring images of a

cheery bunch with pints in their hands, singing a favorite song also is what I imagine. For a demo, this pretty good stuff. —Donofthead (Pasazer)

**AWFUL MAN: *Waiting for the Tanks to Come Rolling in*: 7" EP**

Just like the artwork, Awful Man is a sloppy, exuberant collage of music that's also reflected in the accompanying zine/lyrics sheet: Propagandhi, Cometbus, GC5, Cleveland Bound, Crass all cross borders and overlap and glue and pull at the corners and warp. With ultra-high self awareness as a person, as a member of a band, of a person in a conflicted society, Awful Man also has some of the punk-smartest/punk-funniest/punk-saddest lyrics I've read in quite some time. "Fuck, man, what's it all about? Is it just dumb fucks playing in basements? Are our lives completely controlled? Are these just costumes to a play that'll never have a dress rehearsal?"—those types of things that keep paying-attention, angry-but-pragmatic punks honest and on their toes. Great stuff. —Todd (Dead Broke / It's Not A Phase Dad / Awful Man)

**BAD COYOTES: *Self-titled*: 7" EP**

Slightly blown-out, medium-fi (?) punk/garage stuff. The focus here is less on '60s slop and more on Pagans-styled '70s slop, which is a nice change of pace. —Jimmy Alvarado (Eli's Mile High)

**BAD DOCTORS, THE:*****Distractions*: 12" EP**

You might be confused as to what decade it is when you first listen to this

record, but do not be alarmed. Grab your smartphone and pull up your legwarmers. You have not been teleported into the '80s. Instead, you are appreciating the sonic awesomeness that is the no-wave band The Bad Doctors. Worshipping at the altar of Devo, The Bad Doctors crank out seven of the catchiest songs you're liable to hear this year. The EP comes out of the gates with the up-tempo title track "Distractions." It bounces back and forth between up-tempo tracks and more meandering tracks. "Gunpowder (Nicaraguan Feeling)" and "Candy," were my favorite tracks, though it's difficult picking favorites on an EP so packed with great music. My only disappointment with this was a lack of lyrics in the album liner notes. That aside, if synth-y no-wave is your thing, definitely check out The Bad Doctors. You won't be disappointed. —Paul J. Comeau (Bad Doctors, thebaddoctors@gmail.com)

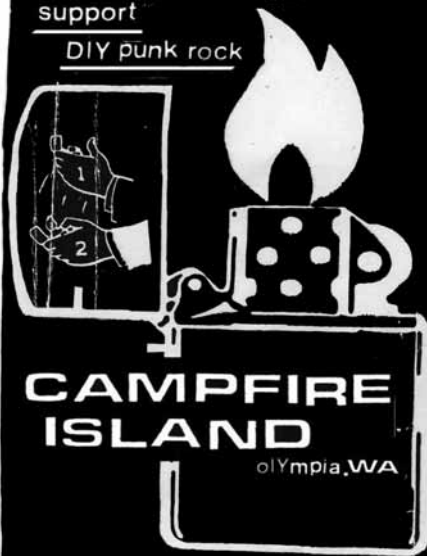
**BAD MAMMALS: *Self-titled*: 7"**

I can't listen to this. The vocals are just fucking gross. The record is heavy (not in sound, but weight). Seriously, what is that? 180 grams? That money'd be better spent on better recordings, preferably of a band none of the people here are involved in. —Megan (Bonfire Club/No Breaks, nobreaksrecords.com)

**BARONESS:*****Yellow & Green*: 2 x CD / 2 x LP**

While not quite as fierce as previous albums, the whole of this double

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album shows this Savannah, Georgia, four-piece maintaining more accessibility (seen in its ability to put some hooks on songs like "Eula" and "Take My Bones Away") but still not proposing such a commercially viable sound that they're not willing to put some instrumental tracks over these seventy-five minutes. *Yellow* seems the more aggressive of the two albums, while *Green* is a little more reflective and mellow, although neither are consistently tied down to those descriptions. Some talk on the interwebs suggest there are those who are disappointed at Baroness's not being as heavy on this new release. I never thought they were that fierce to begin with. *Yellow & Green* makes perfect sense so far as I've observed in their history. *Yellow* is the disc for the old fans—there's still some fire to their craft—while *Green* shows some depth to Baroness—perhaps a sign of things to come? The fact is that there are some good songs on here—ones that will get stuck in your head, others that still retain some great riffs to them, and yet another group that displays a band willing to expand their sound—not for the purpose of selling out, but because they're more than one-dimensional. This is not always something that all music fans (especially those in harder music) seem willing to accept, but which can still hold a great deal of power and emotion in the music. Life isn't always about clubbing one another in the mosh pit. —Kurt Morris (Relapse)

#### BEST PRACTICES: *The EP: LP*

Best Practices strive to, in their words, "return to the fundamentals of punk rock," and I feel they succeed in many ways. This one-sided 12" EP is filled with super-catchy power pop and garage punk riffs played with almost hardcore punk intensity. If this record doesn't make you head bang, fist pump, or foot tap, then you must be catatonic. The song "Triple Kittens" is my favorite, featuring some of the best riffs on the album. The tracks "Future Cougar," and "Get Confident, Stupid," are also favorites for having such hilarious names. Featuring current and former members of Light The Fuse And Run, Wow, Owls!, Weak Teeth, and Jesuscentric, this is not a record to sleep on. I highly recommend it. —Paul J. Comeau (Tiny Engines, will@tinyengines.net)

#### BILL BONDSMEN: *Overcrowded Control: 7"*

Got a demo from them early on and have rather enjoyed watching how they've come along over each subsequent release. They eschew the thrashier aspects of their persona here, opting for two rock solid bits firmly rooted in hardcore, but show a marked progression in their approach to that genre that is more along the pioneering excursions of bands like Die Kreuzen than the perpetual regressions of, say, Agnostic Front. In all, this is some prime-grade work here. Keep pushin' against them boundaries, guys, 'cause

what you're mining can only get more interesting if you do. —Jimmy Alvarado (Bill Bondsman)

#### BLANC: *Tin Griots: CD*

Three-piece from Hanover, Germany fires back with a thirteen song opus. The guitars are like fine bristles rubbing your brain cells gently. Don't give up if the lyrics initially throw you for a loop. Just grab the lyric sheet and hold on. The melodies still hold up nicely. I've never had "Japanese Wine" but I'm sure it is at least as good as AC/DC's latest vintage. Excellent work here, gentlemen. Give this a shot, people. —Sean Koepenick (Jelly)

#### BLOODSHOT AND DILATED:

##### *Bad Intentions: CD*

Depending on the amount of hair and wax buildup in your ear holes, this band might sound similar to late-era Exploited, Accused, and Rocking Dildos. Raw, hyper, Wattie-just-threw-up-in-my-mouth, jacked-up metal-punk that is so excited to kick your teeth down your throat that it trips over its own spiked storm trooper boots as it lunges towards you. This has a sense of alarm to it, like when you're witnessing street-level violence suddenly erupt in a crowd and some hapless schmuck gets chased down and beaten into a pile of raspberry preserves by a pride of wide-eyed sociopaths swinging toilet plungers with nails sticking out of the rubber cups. After seeing the cheesy cover with the played-out Mohawked Skull character, I was ready to skewer this thing with a

thousand fondue forks and feed bloody chunks of it to Andrew W.K. I mean, as iconography goes, even Wattie himself realizes that the Mohawked Skull has jumped and humped the shark so many times that the pedophilic clown, Ronald McDonald, is now considered infinitely more sinister. B&D does come, in many ways, teeteringly close to being some flatulent tough-ass metal pud-jerk, but it's saved from that ignoble fate by virtue of its own hair-on-fire intensity. Even if these guys wanted to strike sulky, tough-guy Danzig metal poses, they simply don't have the time. Not only is this turnip truck on fire and mowing down pedestrians as it careens down the street out of control, but these chaps are busy wiping the guts and juices and human debris from their faces as they speed ever onward. When the stick shift breaks off in your hand and the brakes fail, there's no time for puff-chested Alpha Male posturing. So you might want to wear a mouth guard when you listen to this disc. In fact, I recommend sticking some Martha Stewart brand salad tongs up your ass because once you subject yourself to this sonic onslaught, you're going to need something to help you unpucker your butt-hole. —Aphid Peewit (Self-released)

#### BOBBYTEENS, THE:

##### *Back in the Saddle: Cassette*

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big chunks of their full-length albums. "Gonna Get Down" and "Baby Doll" deserve punk classic status. Essential. This tape is the perfect accessory if you plan to chew gum, lean on a jukebox, or steal a Datsun. —Billups Allen (Burger)

#### BOOTSCRAPER: Self-titled: CD

This sounds like something that should be played on a pirate ship. I really hate this kind of stuff. Decided to look at the insert and there's really lame artwork of them playing on a pirate ship. Real original. Watch out for the curve balls. Sarcasm. The term "Aggro Folk" is prominently displayed, yet this isn't aggressive or folk, it's just bad. —Rene Navarro (TNS)

#### BRICKFIGHT / BOXSLEDDER: Split: 7"

Two bands from Chicago that know what they're doing. These songs were recorded in the basement of Boxsledder's drummer. Brickfight: I've seen these guys live several times and they're great. The songs on here are upbeat, with lots of group vocals. There is a very strong guitar presence. The lyrics are about shit not working out how you wanted it to and moving on. I can relate. Boxsledder: Like Brickfight, this band consists of four dudes. They are a bit faster and the guitars move around more. Their lyrics are about life sucking, for the most part. The singer holds notes very well and the drums bounce around a lot. Really great cover art by Jason Neumann. Each side is a drawing of each band, hanging out and partying. A definite purchase. —Nighthawk (Self-released)

#### BURNING LOVE:

##### *Rotten Thing to Say*: CD / LP

The latest long play from Toronto's Burning Love is fourteen songs clocking in at over thirty minutes, which means a number of short songs. Unfortunately, Burning Love decided to include an "Intro," "Outro," and repetitive track ("12 31") in the middle, which means there's some throwaway material on here. But beyond that there are some great songs on *Rotten Thing to Say*. Highlights include "Superstitious Friend" and "Broken Glass," the last real song on the album. The music on all these songs is snotty, rough, and gruff hardcore punk, noted most fully by the great guitar sound. Lead singer Chris Colohan's vocals are harsh and accent the tough nature of the music. The lyrics are really strong, intelligent, and work well with the music. I've listened to *Rotten Thing to Say* more than a dozen times now and while I can't say it's as good as their debut, *Songs for Burning Lovers*, (it lacks some of the catchiness of that work) it's still a good album of blistering hardcore —Kurt Morris (Southern Lord)

#### CALIFORNIA X:

##### *"Sucker" b/w "Mummy": 7"*

Sludgy and heavy indie rock with no shortage of hooks. This fits in nicely along with bands like Tenement and Milk Music. I'm so stoked that it's suddenly become cool to take one's cues from Dinosaur Jr. If only I'd

thought that way when I was learning to play guitar... —Chris Mason (Sound Of Sweet Nothing)

#### CHEATS, THE: *Pussyfootin!:* CD

Sounds like what you get if you subtract whatever was interesting about Rancid or the Candy Snatchers from Rancid or the Candy Snatchers, put Jeff DeGoe of Moral Disgust on vocals, and then tailored the results just enough to produce an end product acceptable to the Whiskey Rebel. Punk rock that a soundman would like and me without my laminate. Alas. BEST SONG: "Life's Short" BEST SONG TITLE: "Mystery 37" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: "Sin for a Living" is not the Meatmen song "I Sin for a Living." "Gotta Get Away" is not the Stiff Little Fingers song "Gotta Getaway," and "I Don't Need You" is not the Moral Crux song "I Don't Need You." But it would be cool if they were. —Rev. Norb (Screaming Crow)

#### CHINESE BURNS: *Calculator: 7"*

"Calculator" is three-plus minutes of repetitive genius, milking its two chords for all their worth on top of a bubbling rhythm section. "Oh How I Struggle" continues along the in the same minimalist mode, albeit with a more propulsive beat, until they decide to drop a third chord in around the minute-twenty mark. "Kiss Fist" is easily the most "traditional" punk of the lot, a roaring bit of work with a soaring delivery and a more standard structure. The closer, "Steal Your Prayers," reverts

back into minimalism, with a (mostly) two-chord riff a la the Heartbreakers' "I Wanna Be Loved by You," being sure to put much emphasis on the stomp. —Jimmy Alvarado (Windian)

#### COZY: *Cola Shock Kids: 7"*

"Cola Shock Kids" is a potent bit of power pop recalling all the best '70s tunes that frustratingly never got radio airplay, all handclaps and wicked hooks. The flip adds some acoustic guitar 'n' slows the tempo down a hair, but keeps the hooks raining down. —Jimmy Alvarado (HoZac)

#### CREDENTIALS, THE / STEELHORSE:

##### *Split: 7"*

The Credentials: One of my original complaints about The Credentials (on their first LP) was that while, sure, their brand of scrappy punk that took cues from '90s Bay Area bands like Crimpshrine and Fifteen in addition to peers like Witches With Dicks was pleasant enough, it wasn't particularly memorable. I took that record off the turntable and immediately forgot how any of the songs I had just heard went. But, as it often goes, it seemed that the band got stronger and stronger with each release. And this, their final release, is probably their best batch of songs. Too bad, as their trajectory leads me to believe they would have continued to grow by leaps and bounds had they stuck together. Aw well. Steelhorse: Poorly recorded (though I'm totally not complaining) punk rock. The first song reminds me of old Against Me! while


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the second is a bit more mid-tempo and “gruff.” Overall, a solid release worth seeking out. —Chris Mason (Rad Girlfriend / Mindless)

#### CREEM: Self-titled: 12" EP

Heard a lot about this band. All of it good. It's warranted. The lyric sheet says in large letters “NYHC,” but I also hear a lot of Boston influence in there (as well as some Blitz). In particular, Negative FX. Maybe if you took Neg FX and mixed them up with some SFA and Sheer Terror, you would get Creem. The sound is tough without resorting to any metal breakdowns or the usual tricks that lesser bands utilize. I like how the guitar sounds—sharp and tinny—yet there's the gritty distortion that gets in your ears and holds your attention while the drums punch holes in the walls. The vocals are somewhat drill sergeant, but not delivered in the usual rapid fire way. More of a spoken way. This is pure hardcore, not thrash. Songs are more on the mid tempo side, with some speedy parts, but it never becomes a dull blur. Doing so allows them to hit harder and leave a lasting impact. “Dweller” is a nice cooker, with the bass up front, rumbling and building, while everything else crashes behind it. My favorite on here is “The Bricks” which starts off with a heavy oi influence, then picks up the pace and puts a little extra fire in the sound. The whole second side is awesome (the whole record is pretty good, but it's the second side that really stopped me dead for the duration). The cover of Black

East's “What the Fuck” is pretty damn good. I'm going to see these guys in a few days and I anticipate it to be one of the highlights of this summer. —M.Avrq (Katorga Works, katorgaworks.com / Deranged, derangedrecords.com)

#### CRIMINAL CODE: *Cold Thought*: 12"

After an impressive demo and 7", Seattle's Criminal Code unveil a 12" of their triumphant take on early Killing Joke-influenced mid-paced punk. Catchy, though not at all poppy, Criminal Code keeps things interesting by incorporating a unique guitar sound into a style of punk that is all too often just basic and stale. The Northwest has been very generous with talent as of late and Criminal Code is no exception. Recommended. —Juan Espinosa (Inimical)

#### CROWD, THE: *“No Other” b/w “Straight Down”*: 7" and *Landmark*: CDEP

My appreciation for The Crowd runs deep. From the *Beach Blvd.* comp to *A World Apart* in 1981 through *Big Fish Stories*, *Letter Bomb*, and the quiver of Hostage singles in the late '90s and early 2000s, to ...*Goes Wild!* they continue to have a great, prolific run. The Modern Machines named their band after one of The Crowd's songs. It's a well-substantiated rumor that their frontman Jim Decker danced the first HB strut, which quickly morphed into slam dancing. The Crowd were the first day glo punks, merging the HB-tough surf crowd of TSOL to the we're-not-so-serious-but-we're-not-

a-joke musicianship of the Dickies. They live in Orange County. Not “The OC.” So, if this is your first exposure to the band, I have a caveat. Remember the first time you heard the Dead Kennedys or Cypress Hill? It almost sounds like a cartoon character fronting the band, right? But it's just someone with a unique voice giving it their all. The 7" is a deluxe Record Store Day boondoggle: colored vinyl, Japanese-style wraparound insert, credit-card-looking download code, and the first record I can remember having the printing run printed on the record's label itself. The CDEP is a six-song slimcase affair that the band put out on their own imprint, Crowd Control. Both are well worth your time. —Todd (Hostage, hostagerecords.com / Crowd Control)

#### CRUSADERS OF LOVE:

##### *Take It Easy, but Take It*: LP

The songs on this record come across as pop punk with hints of power pop influence sewed in. While the songs are pretty rockin', the pace of this record does not change much. The quality of the singer's voice and the jumpier rock riffs remind me of The Exploding Hearts. This record would be a good choice for fans thereof. —Billups Allen (FDH)

#### CUDZOO & THE FAGGETTES:

##### *Daddy Issues*: CD

Through the decades of rock'n'roll, there have been countless songs about living hard with the help of booze

and multiple outrageous sexcapades, primarily written by the male populous. Until now. This NYC-based outfit is comprised with a triple-whammy of super singin' gals—E-Bomb, Mame-Town, and J-Train—and their four fabulous Faggettes holding down the rhythm section, guitar, and keys (quite fuckin' nicely, I might add). Without at all being derivative, C&TF celebrate the spirit of singing groups like The Shangri-Las and The Ronettes coupled with the rollicking purr of bands like Throw Rag, Mad Daddys, and the Ramones. This is the band that Phil Spector would literally have gone apeshit over, had they been on the scene back then some fifty years ago. But lucky you, you derelict rock'n'roller you, you get to hear them NOW. “You Taste like Intervention,” “The Toxic Shock,” “New York Girls,” “Daddy Issues”—this rekkid is packed to the gills with tunes laced with incredibly catchy hooks, sang with the filthiest of lyrics guaranteed to make even the creepiest of creeps smirk. Rock out with your cock/rack out, indeed! One of my fave albums this year. I am very much looking forward to eventually catching C&TF live. —Designated Dale (Drug Front)

#### CYMEON X:

##### *Pokonac Samego Siebie*: LP

Three vocalists? Three guitar players? Since I don't read the Polish language, I'm wondering if they are mentioning a guest artist or two. That is one big crew and a lot of gear you would have

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to put in the van! From a quick search I have found that this band was in existence from 1991-1994 and then reformed in 2011. They are credited as being one of the first straight edge bands in Poland. Musically, a majority of the songs have that East Coast sound in the vein of Youth Of Today or Gorilla Biscuits. It's more straight forward punk and less of the metal guitar sound. I think people classify it now as the 1988 sound of hardcore. I find this sound way more enjoyable in the long run than the modern hardcore bands. Maybe it's my old age showing, but the music is more palatable for longer listening. But, mixed in, some of the songs are more of the modern hardcore variety with the heavy riffing and gang vocals. The different tempos add to the diversity of the record. If you are into the hardcore/straight edge, this should be put on your want list. —Donofthedeath (Pasazer)

#### **DAMNED: Machine Gun Etiquette: LP**

A reissue of this venerable U.K. punk band's third album, their first without original guitarist Brian James, and a dual triumphant return to form and jumping off point for the sonic excursions they'd take for the bulk of their career. Straight ahead punker fodder like "Love Song," "Noise Noise Noise," and "Anti-Pop" is paired with the proto-goth of "Plan 9 Channel 7," the quasi-psych of "These Hands," and the just-plain-brilliant "Smash It Up." The label's site says this has been remastered and

is in hand-numbered limited edition batches of five hundred in 180 gram vinyl and five hundred in blue vinyl (well, 499, 'cause this copy here is spoken for), so start huntin'. —Jimmy Alvarado (Drastic Plastic)

#### **DAVID KILGOUR:**

##### **Here Come the Cars: LP**

David Kilgour is best known for his work with the Clean, one of New Zealand's finest exports. Over the past twenty years he's also released a slew of solo records. *Here Come the Cars* is a reissue of his first, originally released in 1991. The record opens modestly; the title track barely dips its toes in the water. It's acoustic and sloooow and has only a trace of drums—but be patient, the payoff is coming. We're up to our collective waist with "Fine," which picks up the pace and has a more immediate hook. But it's a bit like ocean water on the belly; it's refreshing but you're aware of it, thinking about it, awaiting more. That comes with the next tracks, three perfect pop songs that wash over you. The rhythm section pushes the tempos. Kilgour mixes in more electric guitars and the songs flow seamlessly. The closing track loops back to the feel of the opener and it's only then that you'll realize that you haven't been able to touch the bottom for awhile. Side two is nearly as good. If the Clean's *Anthology* set left you wanting more, *Here Come the Cars* is worth a day at the beach. —Mike Faloon (De Stijl, destijlrecs.com)

#### **DAYLIGHT ROBBERY:**

##### **Ecstatic Vision: LP**

In 2010, David and Christine Wolf had to replace the equipment that was stolen when their Chicago house was broken into. They wound up building a home studio, where their band Daylight Robbery recorded their gritty second album, *Ecstatic Vision*, on a Tascam 38 tape recorder. The album's lyrics come from people balancing adult responsibilities with playing in a DIY band; rebuilding while sorting out memories and trying not to dwell in the past; asking questions like, "What's the point?" and "Where do we go from here?" While the lyrics are taking stock, the music pushes forward, vibrant, faster, urgent, with David and Christine both sounding more confident and engaged on the mic. Like their first album, *Through the Confusion*, *Ecstatic Vision* has ten songs, but it's five minutes shorter, wrapping up after twenty-eight minutes with the choppy, jolting "Grassroots," one of the few new songs that hasn't jettisoned the band's new wave influence for spacious, propulsive Australian garage like Radio Birdman or Eddy Current Suppression Ring. It's not that Daylight Robbery sound like a different band, it's that they've avoided the "same thing, not as exciting" sophomore trap by putting out a record that is rawer and punker, the live-to-tape closeness (and muffled drums) making it easy to mistake for the lost demos of some awesome L.A. by way of Australia band, circa 1979. A retooled dynamic compensates

for the downgrade in fidelity. In this claustrophobic recording, the guitar parts have a stronger delineation between riffs and leads, and the band creates the signature space between David's dark, desert/surf leads and the counting-trees-flying-by-on-the-highway momentum of Christine's bass and Jeff's drums by minimizing overdubs. If *Confusion* was the sound of running down the middle of a dark street, trying to gauge the closeness of your pursuer's footsteps over the pounding of your heart, *Vision* is peeking out of a gangway, panting, knife pulled, hoping that the person chasing you runs past. Keep fighting, Daylight Robbery. —Chris Terry (Residue, residue-records.com)

#### **DEAD ENDING: Self-titled: 12" EP**

Well, it appears Vic Bondi has had enough with the way shit's goin' down in today's world, and he's recruited members of Rise Against, Alkaline Trio, and The Bomb to release an EP of white-hot hardcore to vent his outrage. The tuneage is some of the most straightforward hardcore he's been involved with in a good while, zippy and rife with righteous anger about all sorts of timely topics—extremism, corporate malfeasance, and the class war that no one wants to admit is happening. Comparisons to Articles Of Faith are inevitable. The similarities are likewise unavoidable—considering he was that band's frontman—but what's here easily stands firmly on its own and raises the bar a bit for those still more worried about pissing off the label or the number

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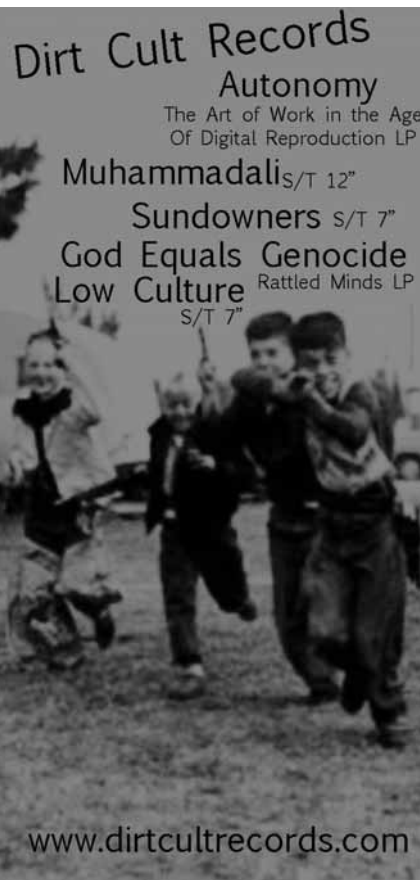
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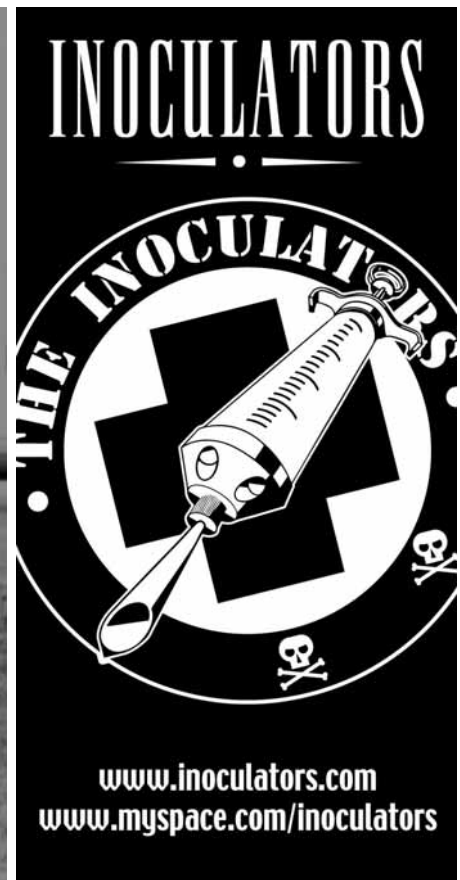
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of units shifted instead of making a point, challenging the status quo, and pissing off people who desperately need it. It also jams a rigid finger in the eye of punkers both old and young who beat their chests and whine that "punk sucks now and was so much better in \_\_\_\_\_." Get with the program, kid. Crucial shit is happening in your world right now, bands *right now* are cranking out some important stuff, and you're missing it all by perpetually living in the rearview mirror. —Jimmy Alvarado (Alternative Tentacles)

#### DICKS, THE: *Hate the Police*: 7"

This isn't up for debate and discussion: The Dicks are punk perfection. Fuck your rules, fuck your scene, and fuck your narrow-minded preconceptions. The Ramones are my favorite band ever, and The Dicks make me think: fuck The Ramones. These tracks are absolute classics. Being weird and being punk should be synonymous, and you shouldn't necessarily be proud of that, but don't let anyone knock you down because of it. The Dicks and The Big Boys are all about being weird and not letting all the assholes around you make you feel bad because of it. Get crazy, get weird, and listen to The Dicks as much as humanly possible. —Daryl (1-2-3-4 Go!)

#### DICKS: *Kill from the Heart*: CD

Anger. Rage. Open hostility to intolerance. Explicitly red. Anti-pig (bourgeois and cop). Lots and lots of pigs and daddies. In the small group of unassailable punk bands that would

be difficult to co-opt (lyrically, at least; it's still amazingly catchy), The Dicks stand in tutus at the top of the heap. Apologies, they have none. Enemies of statism, racism, homophobia, but willing and able to fight with fists and knives, the Dicks weren't a posture. They were resistance. To make and play this music in one of America's dark hearts in Texas in the late '70s-early '80s, flamboyantly and unapologetically, is still pretty unbelievable. I don't say this lightly: Dicks, one of the best punk bands ever. *Kill from the Heart*, one of the best punk records ever. And a Jimi Hendrix cover. And the songs aren't listed in quite the right order. And the *Hate the Police* EP's included. And you don't have to pay multiple hundreds for it? Perfect. Buy this and Big Boys (either of the *Elvises* and *Wreck Collection*) and you've got some heavy antidotes to the couple dumpsters of shit headed your way, COD. A welcome re-issue. —Todd (Alternative Tentacles)

#### DOGJAW: *Slow to Build*: LP

Three-piece from Olympia with two women up front, layering on perfect punk wails. Just the right fuzzy bass tone and dingy guitar, like wet leaves on the ground in the woods. And when it gears up, goddamn, it's like taking off running, or feeling your hair blow backwards. To call this wild would make it sound feral and sloppy; to call it free would make it sound too airy. All I can say is that it has a certain intangible something that makes mixing late '80s

Northwestern punk with early 2000s hippie crust sound new, exciting, and real. —Chris Terry (Rumbletowne, rumbletowne.com)

#### DOPAMINES, THE: *Vices*: CD

Man, so many people are loving this band. There's no way you can please everybody, but here's what I'm hearing personally: *Vices* has a more than passing similarity to *Make Sound-era* Copyrights, if ye ask me, if a bit brighter (they've one guitarist versus two), as well as being more nimble and a bit more frantic. (I know the bands have done a split together, and I'm sure they're sick of the comparison. Sorry, guys.) *Vices* is also a clear continuation of their previous records. The songs are lean and wire-tight, the lyrics—a big plus in my book—are literate and whip-smart and snagged with more than a little doubt and self-loathing. Ten songs, with not of them one over the three-minute mark (and many of them closer to one). It's a concise album, no fat on it, with just the right tinge of desperation that, if it's not intentional, is a hell of a lucky mistake. Nice work. —Keith Rosson (It's Alive)

#### DOWN BY LAW:

##### *Champions at Heart*: CD

Sometimes a band stays together long enough—where a new release exceeds all expectations, not only the band's but the fans as well. This new record by this long-running rock band proves that in 2012, that is still possible. I could tell you how "New Song" has a

slick Fugazi-like riff underneath it that propels the song to the end. Or how "Face Forward" is fast and furious. Maybe how the lyrics of "Knock This Town" pretty much knocked the wind out of me as I tried to finish this review—"this town can be a prison/ but this town is my home/in the sea of sameness/I don't feel like the rest/ even if I want to fit in/I know I'll fail the test." Even that "Warriors United" tosses out some cool Big Country riffs with ease. I should also mention that sonically this gets an A+ as well. Bill Stevenson and Derek O'Brien know their stuff and can twiddle the knobs like no one else. I could talk about every song on this bad boy. But know that if you love melodic punk rock, then you need to own *Champions at Heart*. Put any pre-conceived notions you may have of DBL in the trash can and treat yourself to this one. I'm sure when Lemmy hears this, he will say, "Down By Law—they play rock and roll!" —Sean Koepnick (DC Jam)

#### DYLAN SIZEMORE: *Cashed*: Cassette

The bowl might be cashed... but there's plenty of wine, er, whine left. —Craven Rock (Let's Pretend)

#### ENGLISH SINGLES, THE:

##### *"Disaster" b/w "Face Don't Fit" + "Not Talking Anymore": 7" EP*


I can't be the first to think that Sacramento and Christchurch New Zealand could be sister musical cities. Both Flying Nun and Squirm have the pulse of jittery, crackling,

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minimal-yet-full pop. If this was the '60s, it'd be incredibly popular. That pop—popular pop. (Not the 2010s robot-voice recorder pop.) If this was the '90s, it'd be sporting a K inside a shield logo. For fans of Knock Knock, Nar, Bright Ideas, and the Bananas' love songs about not fitting in and not giving a fuck. Silkscreened on a white dust jacket. Classy and highly recommended. —Todd (Squirmy, englishsingles@gmail.com)

#### ENTH / AMAROK: Split: LP

This record is a bonafide masterpiece of epic doom. Both bands deliver some impeccable music here. Seriously, one of the best I've ever heard of this genre. Enth come on with the heavy riff that lumbers and lurches. Sounds ooze and float in the din. Every hit from the drummer is pronounced, thought not bludgeoning. What makes this song great is how the piano comes in behind a crunching and noisy break, and the vocals change from throaty growls to spoken and sort of in the background. This is actually heavier than the rest of the song. The mood grows more cold and forlorn—the viola at the end stays with you long after the record is over. Amarak are along the same lines, maybe a little bit slower and more brooding. Focus on the music and you will find yourself moving in time, as though you're banging your head in slow motion. Three vocalists, and usually that's overkill, but here it works. The guitars create this sound that hangs in the air like dark storm clouds off in

the distance. Every hit on the drums is deliberate. The vocalists stretch the words out then compress them into deep, corrosive growls. Very hypnotic listening. —M.Avr (Halo Of Flies)

#### EYE FOR AN EYE: Krawedz: LP

Not to be confused with the Boston band with the same name. This band from Poland is on their fifth full length and they still have not become stagnant. From the first time I heard this band to now, this band still holds the appeal right from the first listen. They have the power, charge, and delivery of hardcore but the underlying punk melody of the songs is what keeps my attention. Also, the vocals of singer Anka is very distinct. Her delivery has so much force with her screams, yet she has the control to express the emotion of the songs. Guitars in the foreground provide a precision attack that leads the charge. I like the punchier sound of the bass this time around. It compliments the guitars well yet still stands out on its own. The drummer is on spot with heavy hitting, quick kick pedals and hard accents on the cymbals. They're a band that I hope some day will tour the West Coast so I can experience this live. One of a small list of bands that I can listen to from start to finish and not get bored half way through. It gets my blood pumping. This will get multiple listens frequently. —Donofthedeath (Pasazer)

#### FAR-OUT FANGTOOTH: The Thorns: 7"

A marriage of gothic gloom, shoegaze echo 'n' howl, and the

more experimental of the early skronk-punk tribe. Oddly catchy, they somehow get their hooks into you and drag you down a dark road you ain't really sure you wanna go, but end up all the better for it. This would've easily fit into Subterranean's "classic" catalogue thirty years ago, which is no small compliment. —Jimmy Alvarado (HoZac)

#### FAT STUPIDS: Self-titled: 7"

Really great, straight-ahead, driving punk songs. Three dudes who know how to bring it. Dual vocals on a lot of it, which I really like. "Weirdo" reminds me of The Briefs. And I love that band. Very catchy shit you can dance to. —Nighthawk (Rad Girlfriend / No Breaks)

#### FRIENDS OF DOROTHY:

##### No Sex on Paul Fashion Street: 7"

Luckily for me, few if any people have actually been paying attention to my purple prose since I first started shooting off at the mouth in the pages of this magazine some ten years ago. Otherwise, readers might chafe at the fact that I'm once again going to happily gurggle on about another Henry Fiat-related release. But I will not apologize because my appreciation of the artist formerly known as "Sir Henry Fiat" is utterly without shame. It's just that every so often you come across an artist—be it a musician, author, painter, pro wrestler, porn star, mime—whose work burrows deep into you like a bad case of heart worm. And I guess the

Swede now going by the show-biz name "Paul Fashion" is one of those artists for me. Maybe it's because it seems to me like he and I are on somewhat similar wavelengths. I like that he seems to go off half-cocked in such a brash and reckless manner—whether it's in the context of Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Sir Henry Fiat's Bastard or now Friends Of Dorothy. This is not to say that everything to drop from his well-lubed pay slot is a golden turd. But for me, the flinchy, manic, Miami-style face-eating oddcore of the 7 inches that were compiled into HFOS's *Adulterer Oriented Rock* CD is still the trashy standard bearer by which I judge almost all other attempts at amped-up, garagey Electro-Convulsive Therapy rock, with or without mummy wraps. That CD was (and still is) the ultimate display of rash-causing rawness combined with Ritalin-starved hyperactive energy and a special hebephrenic queerness that can't merely be chalked up to the fact that they are exotic people from a strange, far-away country. And while I'm giving vent to any stupid firefly of a thought that alights in my mind, why is it that the two undisputed Pervert Kings of Scandinavian Punk, HFOS and Turbonegro, never played a show together? I don't know what amount of Aquavit and lutefisk it would've taken to make that happen, but I would've gladly distilled the potato booze myself and caught and soaked the cod in lye with my own hands to make that dream show happen. But enough about those glorious bands of yore; by now I'm sure



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that poor Mr. Fashion is as tired of being dogged by his Henry Fiat persona as poor old Fred Gwynn was tired of being forever thought of as Herman Munster. The happy news is that Friends Of Dorothy is yet another quality outing from the Swede: a four song sampling of Fiat-Fashion's patented brand of hot, thrusting mongo rock that might be favorably compared to early Damned, but with "lewd and lascivious" replacing "cheeky and goth." And with song titles like "Too Depressed for Success" and "Underachiever," it's as if this record was composed just for me. Well, me and Captain Sensible, anyway. This is about as good as non-iTunes music gets and is cause for much dimwitted rejoicing. —Aphid Peewit (Kenrock, myspace.com/kenrockrecords)

#### FULL OF FANCY: *Liquid Nature*: 10"

I can't be the only one who remembers Cub and Buck; who appreciates the Muffs, still has a soft spot for the Runaways. In one ear is a sweet, strident voice that can be lush and forlorn, both disappointed and hopeful. But when the speed comes, the guitars blister pop, roll out spools with barbs, and the drums crash and crumble in cascades. Think girl gangs in satin jackets (and two dudes) pull switchblades at a local bowling alley... then get really high in their basement and order delivery pizza. Knowing a wee bit of current New Jersey history helps. Miranda was in Hunchback and is now in Black Wine. Brian on guitar is now the vocalist for the Night Birds. Full Of Fancy broke

up. Too bad. There's a lot of depth on this record and it's a good listen. —Todd (No Breaks)

#### GIVE: "*Petal Pushing*" b/w "*Taste of Smile*": 7"

Playing post hardcore jams with a rock'n'roll vibe, every Give song is catchy and loaded with epic guitar riffing, but on "Petal Pushing," the band approach an even higher level of greatness. Not only is this track roaring with intensity, it's by far the catchiest of all their tunes. The B Side track "Taste of Smile," is a little more mellow, but equally awesome in overall quality. It's difficult picking a favorite when Give has so many great 7" singles, but after only a few listens, I'd say this is the winner for me. Pick up any of their releases if you come across them, but if you have a choice, get this one first. —Paul J. Comeau (Painkiller, givemusical@gmail.com)

#### GRASS WIDOW: *Internal Logic*: Cassette

Pulling from Lush's signature 4AD sound, (think: *Spooky*), this all-girl trio out of San Francisco gently layer dream pop vocal harmonies, light as chiffon, on top one another. This, their third full length, is buoyed by post-punk bass lines reminiscent of Joy Division and set adrift with early PJ Harvey chord arrangements. "Milo Minute," the first single released last year, kicks off with clean Sleater Kinney-style finger work and glides seamlessly into a late '90s era stripped-down garage melody.

Beautifully hazy all the way to the end. "Goldilocks Zone" and "Hang Around" fit in perfectly on my lazy Sunday afternoon rotation. Recommended. —Kristen K. (Burger)

#### HAT MADDER, THE: *Orgy Opposite*: LP

Wish I could hop in the DeLorean and rev that sucker up to eighty-eight MPH with this guy in my pocket. In 1994, this thing'd set off a bidding war between major labels all hungry for the next big whatever. They'd sign for a billion dollars, get a video into steady 120 Minutes rotation, have a song on the *Empire Records/Mallrats/High Fidelity* soundtrack, develop drug problems (uh, they probably already have those—BIGGER drug problems!), break up, and slip into obscurity, waiting to be discovered in the bargain bin down at the local record emporium. (Or at least on one of them mp3 blogs, anyhow.) These days, they can't even aspire to that level of obscurity. Damned shame, really, cause this is a fine piece of vaguely grungy, semi-new wavey, (there's keyboards, and I know these dudes love Devo) pop-rock goodness that ain't gonna get heard by but a handful've people. "White Tornado" is catchy as shit and deserves to play over a scene where John Cusack is walkin' around lamenting some lost love or some lovable scamps save the record store from closing, all while learning valuable lessons about life and fightin' the man. —Ryan Horky (Good Time Gang, gtrerecords.net)

#### HAUNTED HEADS: *Self-titled*: LP

Rock from Wisconsin. Roots vocal melodies sung in Posies-esque close harmonies. Music from the time in the mid-'90s when mannered indie rock was mixing with post-hardcore to redefine emo. Think bands like Braid or Chamberlain, but played with an exceptional tightness. Dynamics are worked in well, strumming through vocal lines then countering them with palm-muted passages. After a song or two, I was trying to think of a tactful way to say this is a good record but not to my taste, but then I was like, "Fuck it. I like this," and played it through twice. —Chris Terry (Doubleplusgood)

#### HICKEY, THE NAKED CULT OF:

##### *Various States of Disrepair—Complete Works 1994-97*: 2 x LP

Be cautious of music that's too easily digestible, too easily folded into a back pocket of a scene, too easily smoothed in to color some gentrified hair. Be cautious of brain food that's too processed. Be cautious of where your drugs come from. Caution's a funny word because caution didn't seem to be in Hickey's vocabulary. A little rewind: Matty and Aesop started in Florida as the Fuckboyz. Pick up the *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?* comp that Fast Crowd released several years back. It's a perfect companion piece/precursor to *Disrepair*. Hickey experimented. Hickey destroyed. Hickey made universes. Calling them merely melodic DIY punk does them a severe disservice. Think drugs. Nudity.

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Scraping underneath. Escaping. Romanticism. Disenfranchisement. Food stamps and cocaine. Living at surface level. Anti-cop, pro-human. Anti-square. Pro-radiating hearts. Scams. *Scam*. Probe Records released their self-titled debut, which would turn out to be their only full-length release as a band. (It's slated to be released separately from this collection of 7"s, splits, comp tracks, and live recordings.) Shortly after was the Hickey / Voodoo Glow Skulls split 7". The VGS side is threats that the band and Epitaph employees left on Hickey's answering machine. With all of these songs collected (for the third time, but with the D side of nine new, alternative, and live versions), there's this tangible love-fucked relationship Hickey had with the world. *"The straight and narrow road only goes to nowhere and I'm already there."* It's a funny, scathing, naïve-yet-knowing cynicism. It's an apocalyptic vision that gets "answered" with the serious-not-serious plea to join the cult of non-conformity. And jokes. And sadness. *"Warning: guitar solos are known by the state of California to transmit venereal disease."* When all of these scattered pieces are collected and displayed with tremendous care (beautiful packaging, gatefold) the Hickey kaleidoscope becomes more of a telescope examining the cosmos of inevitability, especially when the credits have already rolled: *"I have made my deathbed and now I'll lie*

*in it and finally get some rest."* *"Life is cheap, but livin' is expensive."* Hickey ended in 1998. Matty died of an overdose in 2002. But he ain't dead, 'cause he's still living every time these songs get played, every time the Hickey continuum is rippling back and forth through FYP, The Bananas, All You Can Eat, Riverboat Gamblers, Fleshes, Swing Ding Amigos, Tulsa, Black Rainbow, Potential Johns, and the list goes on and on and on. *"May you always have what you need."* Get your head right; listen to some Hickey. Which side you on? -Todd (1-2-3-4 Go!, 1234gorecords.com, mattyluv.com)

#### HITCHHIKERS, THE: *A Little More Time: 7"*

There are three cool new songs from The Hitchhikers on this nifty slab of vinyl. A refined group with experienced members of The Humpers and The Bleeders, The Hitchhikers sound a lot like both of those other bands, but even more stripped down. The lo-fi recording does a great job of retaining what must be an exceptional live show. Definitely store this record indoors and out of sunlight. It's a keeper. -Art Ettinger (Orange Fight, orangefight.com)

#### HOUSE BOAT: *Thorns of Life: CD*

Is it possible to not really be a Steinways fan but be fully on board for House Boat? Some might say that is impossible. But maybe it all just comes down to the Mikey Erg factor. In any case, this is a solid

platter of songs. "Pityscapes" and "Theme from House Boat" are the ones that will get some solid replays here at the secret bunker. Nice shout out to Pawtucket, RI on the back cover gentlemen. Well played. -Sean Koepenick (Traffic Street)

#### HOWARD ZINN: 1492-1992—*The Legacy of Columbus: CD*

As the title suggests, this is a recording of distinguished historian Howard Zinn discussing Columbus, recorded in Madison, Wisconsin in 1991, on the eve of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his "finding" America. Less a recounting of Columbus's life and exploits than a discussion of *how* and *why* he is contextualized within American history, Zinn examines how portions of that history have been omitted and overemphasized (the minimization of his subjugation and slaughter of native peoples and the highlighting of his nautical skills, for example) to produce a narrative that is more about protecting an unimpeachable image of the greatness of western civilization than about the man himself. Told with his usual aplomb and humor, backed by facts and figures that usually don't make it into history books, Zinn sheds light into another of those dark corners that most Americans are either encouraged to ignore or not given easy access to in order to minimize the threat of too many questions being asked about who we are and how we got here. -Jimmy Alvarado (PM Press)

#### IGNITION: *Complete Services: CD*

Spiffy new 2012 remaster of the entire recorded output of this band. DC music pros offer up some killer post punk songs here. I'm not going to bore you with a history lesson on the band members involved. "I know what my anger means!" Indeed. This has been out of print for awhile, so grab it while you can. Essential listening—you betcha! -Sean Koepenick (Dischord)

#### IMPO & THE TENTS:

##### *Don't Give Me Your Number: 7" EP*

Possibly the dumbest name since Hy Fructose & The Corn Syrup; probably the best record since last June or something! It sounds like Leonard Graves Phillips singing with a garage-edged but pop-savvy Scandinavian punk-pop trio made up of kids who were fathered by the Nomads at a Yum-Yums concert but don't have the attention span to want to sound like either band. The longest song of the four is 2:07, the shortest is 1:34, which spells out "JACKPOT" in my book. It looks great, it sounds great, the vinyl's all blue and cool, even the label looks cool: FUCK POS-T-VAC®!!! IMPO & THE TENTS ARE WHERE IT'S AT!!! BEST SONG: "Tonight" BEST SONG TITLE: "Don't Give Me Your Number" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The three members of this band are named "Yes," "No" and "OK." What, no "Better Not Tell You Now?" -Rev. Nørb (Alleycat, alleycatrecords.se)



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## JETTY BOYS / BOYS CLUB:

### *Jetty Boys Club: 7"*

I do judge a record by its cover quite often, and a two-fold, screened cover (done by Andy Binder) ranks pretty highly with me. Jetty Boys: I'm just beginning to separate them in my head from the Leg Hounds, which isn't really fair to them. I adored the Leg Hounds, so it's a pretty big shadow I've left them standing in. They've held their ground, have consistently been putting out some of the best pop punk out there currently, and have every reason to be valued on their own laurels. The songs here are no exception. Catchy as hell. Boys Club: Good ol' pop here (no power or punk attached). It's done well, really well, actually, but it's one of sounds that no matter how much I like listening to it, I'm certain I'd be bored to tears seeing it live. But, as recorded, I was really pleasantly surprised by this (plus, I love, love, love Warren Zevon covers). —Megan (I Hate Punk Rock, [ihatepunkrock.net](http://ihatepunkrock.net))

## JOHN WESLEY COLEMAN:

### *Bad Lady Goes to Jail: CD*

My first introduction to John Wesley Coleman was a very pleasant one. Masters level course in rock and roll on this here CD. John Wesley Coleman, like Ty Segall, seems to have a tremendously deep understanding and appreciation for the garage and psychedelic genres, particularly. No superficial posturing to be found, only finely skilled guitar work, reverb-filled lo-fi recordings, and incredibly catchy

choruses. "Lazy Baby" with its honky-tonking drums, swelling organs and simple, longing refrain of "Come on lazy baby, don't you wanna dance with me?" should get you singing along and shuffling your feet in a hurry. "Get High Babe" echoes the late '60s MCs freak outs with its wobbling bass, jamming percussion, and screeching vocals. "Go Baby Go" mellows out with a Roy Orbison inspired vocal melody. "Come on Cops" is reminiscent of Meat Puppets, acid-fried punk with lots of twangy, Southwestern flavor. The closer, "New York," is leather jacket, brass knuckle tough with a swagger akin to "Today Your Love, Tomorrow the World." All told, there's a lot to like about this here record. This will be on heavy rotation for a while. —Jeff Proctor (Goner)

## KAM KAMA: *The Tiled House: LP*

I've probably listened to these six songs more than all my other review materials combined. It's become my breakfast and bedtime record. It somehow manages to both get me psyched and calm me down. The cover of this LP is black and white checkers, so you can't blame me for expecting ska, which I adore, but what blasted out of my speakers was even better. I can't quite pigeonhole their sound, which is such a rare treat. I'd say it's almost post punk, reminiscent of Joy Division or Echo & The Bunnymen, but with a real modern Whitest Boy Alive vibe. This is such a great batch of songs; I get excited just writing this review, hoping

someone will actually check them out. I'm grateful for this music and its ability to make me dance around my kitchen or doze off as I cuddle with my wife. —Rene Navarro (Sister Cylinder, [sistercylinder.bigcartel.com](http://sistercylinder.bigcartel.com))

## KID LITTLE: *Let Yourself Go: Cassette*

A supergroup of sorts, featuring various San Pedro, California residents who also happen to be members of Killer Dreamer, Toys That Kill, Underground Railroad To Candyland, and others I may not be aware of. This is basically the sound of some jam sessions gone incredibly right between friends who all share a deep appreciation for bare-bones garage punk. You could hardly ask for more and should not expect anything less than the soundtrack to a rockin' good time from these folks. —Juan Espinosa (Burger c/o Kid Little)

## KIDDA BAND: *"Fighting My Way Back" b/w "Saturday Night Fever": 7"*

I've already spilt copious quarts of seed in these pages expressing my admiration for the late '70s/early '80s UK punk-pop-power-pop of the Incredible Kidada Band; everyone in the world should obtain the "Too Much Too Little Too Late" double album, feast upon the band's Starjets/Records/Pop Mullet ethos, and that's that. Since I've heard all these songs a jillion times over, the various Kidada Band 45s being pumped out today are more like cool fan trinkets than actual Passports Into Awesome for me; this reissue of the band's second 45 ((originally

released in 1979 on Carrere Records)) comes in an authentic plain white sleeve in authentic black vinyl with an authentic pink label with "KIDDA BAND" and "Fighting My Way Back To You" and most of the other stuff written horizontally in black letters, and "CARRERE RECORDS" written in larger white letters up the side. I'm not exactly sure why I need it, but it does look nice sitting around the hotel pool with me, so I'm glad to have it on board. *More snickerdoodles, dear?* BEST SONG: "Fighting My Way Back" BEST SONG TITLE: Uh... I'll say "Saturday Night Fever," since that's my favorite Devil Dogs album. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The A-side has a big "A" on it, but the B-side doesn't have a big "B" on it. Weird. —Rev. Norb (Last Laugh)

## KING TUFF: *Self-titled: LP*

Second King Tuff album, second of his bands to be on Sub Pop (the other being Happy Birthday's 2010 self-titled album, which might as well have been called *King Tuff with Synthesizers*.) I never did understand the Sub Pop connection, as King Tuff always struck me more as a Burger Records type of laid back, white-trash-hep, small town-to-Brooklyn type. Shows what I know! Anyway, this is a pretty good pop garage record, not as immediately great as *Was Dead* but it grows on me with each listen. Mr. Tuff continues to espouse the slacker lifestyle with jams like "Alone and Stoned," "Keep on Movin'" and "Loser's Wall." "Bad Thing" is my



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favorite. The packaging is nice; includes thick stock cover and a four page lyrics/art sheet. —Sal Lucci (Sub Pop)

#### LIKE BATS: *Midwest Nothing*: LP

Full disclosure: I've never been a fan of Lawrence Arms, and it is incredibly difficult to discuss this band without making the comparison. This is distinctively Midwestern punk rock with nasally yet gruff vocals. With that said, a couple listens in and I think I'm a fan. While a little under half of the songs fall flat, the rest of this album is top notch. Like Bats really excels when things get a bit more mid-tempo, a bit darker, a bit more melodic, and a bit heavier. Those moments are so much more memorable than their more straightforward pop punk moments. In my mind, this nine song LP would have made a killer four or five song 7". Regardless, this record is worth picking up, and I look forward to hearing what direction this band chooses to go in next. —Chris Mason (John Wilkes Booth/Bloated Cat)

#### LIKE BATS: *Midwest Nothing*: LP

Pop punk in the post-Hüsker/Leatherface/Descendents vein. Gruff vocals, a sly reference to U2's "Sunday Bloody Sunday" in the first song's guitar lead, and no shortage of lyrics about dysfunctional living and dysfunctional loving. —Jimmy Alvarado (Bloated Cat)

#### LITERATURE: *Arab Spring*: LP

Indie pop with different little bits—'60s jangle, '70s power pop, '80s twee, and

'90s, well, indie pop—mixed together. The general mood's upbeat, the songs well written and infectious. —Jimmy Alvarado (Square Of Opposition)

#### LOVE COLLECTOR: *Human Bodies*: 7" EP

The one-sheet describes 'em as "Buzzcocks meet *Bloodstains across Texas*," but I'm definitely not hearing the former in there (okay, maybe a smidge in "Non-Stop Love"). What I do hear here is some prime-grade sloppy trash punk very much in line with the Rip Off Records stable o' noise, not too fast, but emphatic and memorable. —Jimmy Alvarado (CQ, cqrecords.com)

#### M.O.T.O.: *Bolt!*: LP

The first time I saw MOTO they were playing in a Chicago record store on some Independence Day or another, and, after making my way to the merch zone, I was absolutely gobsmailed by what I saw: Dozens and dozens—for all I knew, hundreds and hundreds—of different MOTO CD-R's for sale. A fucking ocean of hand-lettered song-titles, crudely scrawled illustrations, and slimline jewel cases. MOTO songs, twenty at a crack, as far as the eye could see, in what might as well have been an infinite recursion. I was paralyzed. I didn't know where to start. I didn't know what to buy first. My brain shut down; I wound up not buying anything and spending all my money on Old Style® at Wrigley Field. Paul Caporino has written and recorded a fuck-ton of songs. A FUCKING FUCK-

TON! I'd say the guy is legitimately up there with über-prolific street crazies like Daniel Johnston or Wesley Willis in terms of sheer volume of output, and the appellation of "the punk rock Guided By Voices" isn't that far from the mark. This particular album is a re-issue of a twenty-song 1986 cassette, and is a stone hoot from start to finish. In addition to supplying the well-known "Dick about It" and "Month of Sundays," "Bolt!" also houses a spate of equally mind-blowingly offbeat punky-poppy obscurities, like "Catholic World" "Destroy the Earth" "Killer Shrews" "Sickle Cell Express" and "Buckingham." "Sickle Cell Express" is particularly amazing, in that if you woulda blindfolded me and asked me what year in which I imagined that song to be recorded, I would've said "1967, and probably on one of those 'Boulders' records!", at least until it got to the part about Frank Sinatra shaving off his pubic hair. If you would have perpetrated the same schtick with "Buckingham," I would have said "1971," and, absent any references to the Chairman of the Board's manscaping, would never have been the wiser. CONSUMERS!!! PARALYZE NO FURTHER!!! IF YOU ONLY BUY THIRTY MOTO RECORDS THIS MONTH, MAKE THIS ONE OF THEM!!! BEST SONG: "Sickle Cell Express" BEST SONG TITLE: "Walk Don't Walk" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The album cover looks like the Jolt® logo, but the original cassette cover looks more like the Flash's logo. *Where's Sheldon Cooper when ya need him?* —Rev. Nørb (Rerun)

#### MIDNITE SNAXXX: *You Kill Me*: 7"

Three songs from new snot rock seamstresses Midnite Snaxxx. Members include Bobbyteens singer Tina Lucchesi on drums. I might have my head up my ass for being a Bobbyteens fan, but this band rocks and rolls the same road, and, therefore, I'm way into it. —Billups Allen (Goner)

#### MODERN DAY RIPPERS:

##### *Rip It Up in a Modern Way*: CD

Debut record from these grizzled Chicago punk vets. What would Fear sound like fronted by Jello? Maybe something like this! "C.T.A." and "Liquor Store Blues" are my favorites here. There are also some tunes about various drugs you can ingest in your free time. The back cover was a nice touch too. I would like to see these dudes live at some point, but I don't think I would shake the singer's hand afterwards, since his name is Germ. —Sean Koepenick (Sexy Baby)

##### MOOVALYA: *Self-titled*: CD

I went to the first two Warped Tours, skipped a year, went back in 1998 and then stopped going for a while. Then one of the bands playing a local Warped date stayed with me in 2002, so I went back. I had an embarrassingly good time and started attending Warped Tour again. In recent years, the majority of bands on the tour play a very complicated new form of emo, with screamed lyrics over technically adept hardcore. Moovalya is more accessible than most contemporary new school emo-influenced punk.

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*tattoo flash by Justin Brophy*

They're the sort of band that can make older snobs understand the appeal of the present day Warped Tour sound. There's a definite link from the music of the past to this newish form, but its immediate influence is itself. Chances are, the kids are having more fun than you are. Why not check out what they're into? —Art Ettinger (Dagger Sight, daggersight.com)

#### MULTICULT: *Spaces Tangled*: LP

Out of Baltimore, this trio has let their second full length fly. In "Stop Calling," post grunge builds on noise rock with sharply strummed chords and battle cry vocals. "Groteske" showcases their ironic lyrics with a shout out to Gerard Depardieu and almost sounds like it's played at 35 RPM instead of 45 with its slow-as-molasses crescendo. I kept anticipating the rest of the melody and wanting to pull the song along—not a bad thing! "Billows" is the most straight forward grunge'n'roll track constructed on a couple of fuzzed-out, alternating guitar hooks. Pulling from At the Drive-In's pure energy and others like Bad Brains and New York's Manual Zombie, Multicult has handpicked some of the best components of post punk in attempts to assemble a new patronage. I'm all in. Recommended. —Kristen K. (Sleeping Giant Glossolalia, sleepinggiantglossolalia.com)

#### MURDERBURGERS, THE: *How to Ruin Your Life*: CD

An album's worth of pretty convincing pop punk from Scotland. Maddy Tight

Pants would have a lengthy review ready, complete with cereal comparisons, but me, I'll just say they sound like a pretty convincing do-over of *How to Make Enemies*-period Screaming Weasel, without the heavy pop culture nods. Songs like "Broken Brain" carry a surprisingly dark undertone to them, while the follow-up "Moron" (with its notably catchy chorus of "You're a fucking moron" x 100 or so) takes a blitzkrieg Ramones approach. It's hard to make stuff like this truly memorable, but the Murderburgers aren't slouches. Nothing new, but *How to Ruin Your Life* is certainly nothing for fans of It's Alive, Red Scare, or the Lookout back catalog to shy away from. —Keith Rosson (Monster Zero)

#### NEON PISS: *Self-titled*: LP

Bay Area hardcore-influenced punk that feels heavily inspired by bands from both Copenhagen and Umeå. Think Wasted Sounds, Ny Våg, Kick N' Punch, or Hjemespind. Shit's-fucked tunes that pack a mangy, soggy sound. The punk just drips off, leaving a puddle you dare not step in. Consisting of four veterans of the best leaky basements and cramped living rooms that DIY has to offer, Neon Piss is a truly talented outfit. And for all those "Regulations vs. The Vicious" debates that were never resolved, hopefully now we can all now just agree on Neon Piss. —Daryl (Deranged)

#### NO CLASS: *II*: LP

Picks up where their first LP left off. The songs are thrashing and tense

with some stop go parts, quick tempo changes, and some noisy parts that make their presence known here more than before. You can hear the band starting to push at the boundaries of their sound and see where they can take it. "That's Just You..." has a noisy middle with some voice overs muttering in the din, and the results are okay. But I think they have the ability to do much better. They seamlessly transition into the rager "Burning Bridges" which cranks the energy to the red. And then they end the song with just a guitar hitting notes and letting them float into the air and fade away. Actually very cool and a nice switch. Totally changes the mood of the record for a brief moment from anger to somber. "Let Down," which closes the record, is the definite standout. A bit speedy, with some avalanche-style percussion that sends the song over the edge. Interested to see what these guys have planned next. This is pretty damn good. —M.Avr (Deranged, derangedrecords.com)

#### NO: *Can You Dig It*: LP

Ripping punk'n'roll from Connecticut. No have been tearing up shows in the Northeast for awhile now. At long last, their debut LP is now available for your listening pleasure, bringing every ounce of the ripping party that is a No live show to your living room—minus other sweaty punks knocking over your furniture and spilling beer everywhere. Offering up super catchy riffs with lots of guitar shredding, care of guitarist/vocalist Carlo Frese, and lots of epic singalongs,

this LP offers everything I could want in a fun punk'n'roll album. I couldn't stop listening to this, and you won't want to either. —Paul J. Comeau (Electric Indian, nowaitwhat@gmail.com)

#### NOT YET!

##### *It's a Small World, Alcohol*: Cassette

Just when I am about to write off modern punk rock, releases like this one find their way into my hands thus restoring my faith in the musical form. Not Yet! seems to be the brainchild of YouTube sensation Jose Anything. Given the chance to flesh out his songs within a band format really takes his material to a higher level. Thematically, the songs are of the "young, drunk, and in love" variety but don't come off as cheesy or schmaltzy. Containing only four songs, this tape left me wanting more. In fact, this tape is clearly one of the best things I've heard this year. I am looking forward to hearing more from Not Yet! —Garrett Barnwell (John Wilkes Booth)

#### NOUN: *Holy Hell*: LP

Noun is the mostly-solo side project of Screaming Females guitarist/vocalist Marissa Paternoster. I've been a big fan of Screaming Females over the years, but I'm not really sure what to make of Noun. Marissa sings in all of these songs and plays guitar, piano, and any other instruments not credited to the list of guest musicians in the liner notes. From the first track, "Black Land," and throughout the album, we hear Paternoster exploring her vocal range


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to good effect. She's clearly a talented vocalist beyond being the eponymous screaming female in her main band. As an album though, *Holy Hell* is a bit all over the place. There are tracks that sound like they could easily have been Screaming Females singles, or tracks—like the aforementioned “Black Land,” and “Call Earth”—which sound like something else entirely. The songs that don't sound like Screaming Females were the tracks that most interested me on this, mainly the tracks where Marissa plays piano and sings. There was a very cabaret feel to these songs that I was into. While I was a bit more intrigued by the songs that didn't sound like Paternoster's main band, overall this didn't move me the same way Screaming Females does. —Paul J. Comeau (Don Giovanni)

**NUCLEAR SANTA CLAUST:**  
**Self-titled: 7" EP**

Five tracks of thud punk not far off from bands like the Spits, but with a bit more “rock” mixed in to give things a bit more of a *Killed by Death* sheen. —Jimmy Alvarado (Don Giovanni)

**OFF CAMBER: Self-titled: Cassette**

Quick, mysterious little four-songer here. Drawing from a '90s screamo template both European and American (Orchid, Sugar Pie Koko, Betercore, etc.) on the A side, the one song on the flip verges on John Zorn/Ruins avant-garde weirdness. Cryptic lyrics, very little band info offered, creative but minimalist packaging. Not sure how

much this will appeal to the majority of *Razorcake*'s readership—though it would've gone over like gangbusters in a back issue of *Heartattack*—but these songs are concise, jagged, and creative, and they've certainly piqued my interest. —Keith Rosson (Off Camber)

**ONSIND: Mildred, Margie, Annie, Clarice: 10" EP**

When I mention a band is feminist and acoustic I know a lot of you will automatically consider that a big bag of suck and probably try and trip me when I walk past you. I get it, I know. Understanding that, I still want to shove these four songs down all your throats, knowing you'll eventually thank me for punching your esophagus with my personal tastes in music. Don't believe me? Each song is about a female character from four movies: Mildred (Nurse Ratchet) from *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Margie from *Fargo*, Annie from *Misery*, and Clarice from *Silence of the Lambs*. So it's smart, catchy, fun, very well written, and full of movie references. If you were listening to me talk, instead of just reading this in my voice, this is part where I grab you by your shoulders and shake you violently while proclaiming, “This is my favorite EP of the year!” very loudly in your narrow-minded face. —Donna Ramone (Plan-It-X, onsind.bandcamp.com)

**ORGANS: Breathing with the Dead: 7"**

“Breathing with the Dead” is a mostly acoustic shuffler with atonal vocals,

which sets the mood nicely enough. The flip, a garagey barn-stomper called “All Alone,” is the much more satisfying of the two, however. —Jimmy Alvarado (Putal!, putarecords.com)

**PAPER BAGS: II: 7" EP**

Four cuts of potent thud punk in the fine tradition that No Front Teeth has established for itself—catchy, tight, and packed to the rafters with swagger. Crank it up and tell the boss to go fuck himself. —Jimmy Alvarado (No Front Teeth, nofrontteeth.co.uk)

**PIETASTERS, THE: oolooloo: LP**

Originally released in '95, *oolooloo* finally sees vinyl as part of The 3rd Wave Ska Preservation Society Vinyl Reissue Project. Funnily, while I've known all the songs on this album for just shy of twenty years, I've never owned the album 'til now (most of them are on the live album, *Strapped Live*, which is the only album I ever held on to). In the late '90s I loved the Pietasters. Loved in the way that I only went to see Joe Strummer because they were opening. They got on stage and said they had the best job, playing for fourteen minutes before getting to watch Joe Strummer play. I almost left after their set. (I wasn't that into the Mescaleros. A friend had seen the show the night before and Strummer threw in only one or two Clash songs.) I stayed and promptly had my ass handed to me as Strummer launched into almost a full set of Clash songs with tons of energy. Seriously one of

my favorite show memories ever. As time passed, I listened to The Pietasters less and less. To be fully honest, I picked up the album because I wanted to support the project, but it's gotten to be one of the most-played records since landing on my doorstep. It's catchy as hell and it doesn't take more than two seconds of “Girl Take It Easy” to pick up (pick it up, pick it up) my mood. They were one of the few ska bands at the time who seemed to have a sense of humor without being a shtick and just wanted to party. I appreciated it then, and hell, it's 2012 and I'm not scared to admit I goddamn love this third wave ska record. —Megan (Asbestos, asbestosrecords.wordpress.com / Underground Communique, undercomm.org)

**PINKZILLA: Self-titled: CD**

One o' them bands that hop scotches between punk, metal, scum rock, and stoner rock. Things are heavy, the guitars chugga-chugga along, the drums wham-bam relentlessly, and the singer howls from the gravel pit that is his voice box. —Jimmy Alvarado (Pinkzilla)

**PLATEAUS: Do It for You: 7"**

Unabashed Velvets worship abounds throughout this. Not a bad thing, if done well, and while their lyrics don't appear at first blush to have the same focus on the seedier side of life, they do make good use of repetitive riffs and stomping rhythms that are more “Waiting for the Man” than “Venus in

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Furs.” Is it genre defining? Probably not, but I’ll take a couple of these over one more NOFX clone any goddamned time. —Jimmy Alvarado (HoZac)

#### PLÖTSIG MANDAG:

##### **Drag en Tejp Runt Mina Lar: 7” EP**

Here you get a drummer aiming for the tribal end of the spectrum; a bassist embedding simple, repetitive riffs straight into yer cranium; a guitarist who loves his drone; another guitarist who sounds like he’s running through three distortion boxes and has a cord that keeps shorting out at inopportune times; and a Swedish cat who actually tries to sing over the top of the ensuing chaos. Hardcore, noise, art-punk, whatever hole you wanna cram it into, this is definitely worth extended listening sessions. —Jimmy Alvarado (Gaphals, gaphals.se)

#### POOR LILY: **Three Songs: CD**

“Ooookay,” I think. “A shrink-wrapped CD single that won’t play in CD player. Great. Computer reads the band as Judas Child, and the songs as “Early Morning Peace,” “Happy Place,” and “This Soul Has Flown.” Huh. This will be stellar, I’m sure.” Then I press *Play* and my jaw promptly bounces to floor. Poor Lily’s a three-piece, mostly out of Brooklyn, that features dudes—I shit you not—from Beyond, H2O, and Lightning Crabs playing what sounds like Some Girls deviously and fuckedupedly covering the Minutemen. Three songs. It’s bizarre, surprising, frenetic, wound tight as a spring,

riveting as shit, and really, really good. —Keith Rosson (Poor Lily)

#### PSYCHED, THE: **Self-titled: CD**

Dissonant garage rock: fucked up, sound’s blown out, messy performances, a wretched Sam Cooke cover—all the things fans of this genre find so peachy keen squooshed onto one disc. —Jimmy Alvarado (Black Gladiator / Slovenly, slovenly.com)

#### PUSRAD: **Smartrams: 7”**

Seven songs: the shortest being thirteen seconds, the longest thirty-five seconds. I was expecting power violence, but what you get is fast punk without blast beats. All the songs sound the same and it comes off as being both pretentious and undeveloped at the same time. The entire record is under three minutes. I don’t get it. —Craven Rock (Just 4 Fun, j4f.dk)

#### PYROKLAST:

##### **The Madness Confounds: CD**

Metallic punk stuff with a gravel-voiced singer howling lyrics about big energy, scene politics, living outside the confines of a corporate-run society, and the like. —Jimmy Alvarado (Barbarian)

#### RAD COMPANY / DISCRETIONS:

##### **Split: 7”**

Rad Company: Kind of gruff, yell-y pop punk that’s somewhat of a standard these days. You know, the kind that you’d see playing one of the smaller bars at Fest at like three in the afternoon

on Sunday. Discretions: Way noisier, faster, and kind of thrash-y, mixed with some sad bastard lyrics. It’s almost like if early era Jawbreaker was made up of dudes who weren’t sappy nerds. Have I heard that this band is good before? They’re kind of good! —Joe Evans III (Rad Girlfriend)

#### RANCID HELL SPAWN:

##### **“Abolition of the Orgasm”: 7”**

I knew this was going to suck from the moment I saw the horrible, slapped-together design featuring photos of trans women and a contortionist lady that a very out of touch Mr. Spawn found by googling “weird.” I was right. This is shitty, guy-in-his-basement, distorted noise-punk by the kind of guy who names his “band” Rancid Hell Spawn. By that, I mean some guy who gets positive reinforcement from every bad review, thinking he’s doing something edgy and subversive. Nope... sucks! —Craven Rock (Wrench, mail@wrench.org)

#### RAPE REVENGE: **Paper Cage: 7”**

*Paper Cage* is a trip into the angry world of Rape Revenge. Whether railing against apathy, sexual violence, homophobia, or the hypocrisies of the punk and leftist movements, they drag hardcore from its font-obsessed ghetto and make it crucially relevant again. The lead singer, blind with rage, shrieks over some intricate, tight power violence with time changes reminiscent of Converge. The songs are only a few lines long, but in the liner notes,

they give long written explanations to what they’re so pissed about. Just for the record, I feel compelled to mention Rape Revenge is a straight edge, vegan, queer, feminist band from Calgary. That’s awesome, but do they rock? Absolutely, they are full of vigor and integrity and are talented enough to keep things interesting and fresh. Fuck yeah! —Craven Rock (To Live A Lie)

#### RAPSÖD / STOLEN LIVES

Hardcore with that distinct Eastern European feel. Rapsöd remind me a lot of See You In Hell, but they are definitely not mere parrots of that style. Their side of the record blazed a fiery swath through my record collection and made me want to pull out my own heart and eat it in a paroxysm of punk fury. Stolen Lives, while not quite as fun in my opinion, are still quite good. Their sound is a bit more standard and sounds a bit less uninhibited (if it’s possible for a hardcore record to be even a bit “inhibited”), but I still liked it a whole awful lot. Good record. —The Lord Kveldufur (Different / PHR)

#### RATIONAL ANTHEM:

##### **Sensitivity Training: LP**

I’m finding that more often than not my bias against “pop punk” is unfounded, and here Rational Anthem goes proving me wrong again. I can’t deny that even though (or maybe because) I know exactly where these songs are going to go after hearing a few chords that they have a way of imbedding themselves into my brain. Sometimes

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I'm perfectly okay with not being the least bit surprised. Think early Blink 182 getting the shit kicked out of them by life and you're in the right place. —Chris Mason (Bloated Cat)

#### **RATMASK: Demo: Cassette**

Always good to hear some straight-up hardcore punk being cranked out without any pretense or hollow pose. Ratmask belt out seven crunchers that are heavy and moderately fast. Instead of pummeling whirlwind speeds, they deliver their sonic beating through largely mid tempo and riff-heavy songs. The vocalist sounds like he's being strangled, and at times he's so pissed he can't even get the words out, to where it sounds like he's saying, "Yaay yah yah uh yaaaaa!" Lyrically, it's all vitriol against co-workers, pro-lifers, feeling useless, and society in general (there's a lot of lyrical inspiration out there these days). If you want some no-frills hardcore that is loud and pissed, and good for venting to, then Ratmask are a good place to look. No idea why we're just getting this now when it was released in 2009. Anyhow... —M.Avrq (Drug Party, drugparty.org)

#### **RAYON BEACH:**

##### ***This Looks Serious: CD***

Haven't watched these guys too closely. Really like their *The Memory Teeth* EP from a couple years back. What's on here is a little more focused and slightly poppier. They seem to be taking less risk, sound-wise, than before. Where songs on the aforementioned EP would

go off into other sonic realms, what's on here tends to stay close to the vest, so to speak. However, there's more drive in the newer material, which could definitely appeal to a larger audience. I like the backing vocals on "Airplane with Tits," as it gives the song a campy horror movie soundtrack vibe. The instrumental "Girls and Boys" stands out with its slight fuzzed-out and dark vibe. But other than that, this doesn't do a whole lot for me. I prefer it more when they push at the borders of their songwriting and veer off into slightly weirder territories. —M.Avrq (Hozac)

#### **RED DOVES: Off the Grid: LP**

Like the Regulations, Sweden's Red Doves recalls some of West Coast U.S. punk rock's higher points. The sound here, however, is a bit more spread out across the left coast than their fellow punker countrymen: South Bay-influence, with shades of *Nervous Breakdown*-era Black Flag, Sick Pleasure, Los Olvidados, and maybe even the Lewd commingling all nice and friendly-like within the onslaught of short-tempered thud that comes in, musses up the room a bit, then fucks off before you know what hit you. —Jimmy Alvarado (Gaphals, gaphals.se)

#### **ROSE CROSS: Self-titled: 7"**

Yes. I'm really digging the resurgence of itchy-scratchy, agitated, smart, non-bro, static-fast hardcore. Rose Cross fits in with Brain ≠ and Joint ≠. It's breathless but has melody. It's fast, but it's not a slur-blur. It's agitated, but not

pointlessly angry. It's intelligent in a bad, shitty-awesome tattoo way. If this is the direction more hardcore bands are headed in, sign me up. Features Peanut of The Y on drums. —Todd (Drugged Conscience, druggedconscience.com — free download right from the site.)

#### **SA90: Psychopathic Little Girl: CD-R**

Sounds like a mix of studio and live recordings from a band that have tell-tale signs they might have roots that go a wee bit deeper than the past decade. There's definitely the tinge of bar punk to 'em, which isn't necessarily a bad thing, but when you least expect it, the band takes on the attack of a band that sounds like it cut its teeth in straight ahead early/mid-'80s punk/hardcore. I really can't explain the sound other than to say it's like dispensing with nuance and "style" and opting instead to assault the instruments. It's usually evidence that those responsible learned by doing rather than spending hours at home honing their "craft." This, along with the comparatively primitive quality of the recordings (which are clean but don't sound like they've been ProTooled to death) lends the proceedings some edge and a feel of authenticity. —Jimmy Alvarado (SA90, sa90punk.com)

#### **SCAMS, THE:**

##### ***Rock and Roll Krematorium: LP***

This is just a good, solid hard rock record right here. Hailing from Sweden and heavily influenced by Hellacopters/Gluecifer, this band

brings a stronger songwriting effort to the table. The results are excellent. Hints of NWOBHM and more melodic elements abound, but there is no doubt that this band is from Scandinavia when you hear The Scams. —Mike Frame (Jailbreak, jailbreakrecordsusa.blogspot.com)

#### **SCREAMIN' MEE-MEES, THE:**

##### ***Live From the Basement 1975-1996: LP***

Mid-'70s proto/pre/post-punks from St. Louis, these divinely-inspired louts—best known for 1977's "Hot Sody," an ode to quaffing solarly-heated cans of pop—were sort of bridge builders between the era of "Willie the Wild One" and the Keggs and what-not, and the era of "Inside My Brain" and the Urinals and what-not. And, while the cultural significance of two guys thudding around in a St. Louis basement singing songs like "Pigs" in 1975 probably can't be understated ((or can it?)), and i do enjoy the Meat Puppets-meets-King-Unsiewicz charms of the more focused numbers, i spend a fair amount of time looking at my metaphorical watch during this record and remembering how much i dislike that Fuckin' Flyin' A-Heads 45. Hang on, i think i need to go stick another can of Tab™ in the microwave. BEST SONG: "Struckout" BEST SONG TITLE: "Arthritis Today" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: This is almost surely the only record i own that features the phrase "No! That's not arthritic enough!" —Rev. Nørb (Vulcher/Hate)

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**SELVFORAKT: *Outra Dia, Outra Caça*: EP**

Excellent metallic crust core from this trio. Mix up Misery and Anti-Cimex with Disarm and you'll get Selvforakt. Tons of chugging low end with a heavy guitar sound. The vocalist is excellent, delivering the words with a throaty sound. The songs are mainly mid-tempo for a more lethal effect and allow you to really get in and absorb the songs to the fullest. I absolutely love the bass sound on this recording. It's heavy, sinister, and all-around nasty sounding. My favorite of the four skull crushers on here is definitely "Políticos de Merda," which is equally heavy and catchy. The bass is simple and repetitive and effective as hell. Check out that break, where it's just the bass idling for a moment, with some Discharge style guitar work coming over the top. Can not stop listening to this! More! More! More! —M.Avrq (Terrotten, info@terrotten.com)

**SHOCK TROOPERS:*****Too Fast for Sleeves*: CD**

So much snot. Pools of it. Once it's got you, it's got you. Like quicksand. Only more fun. —MP Johnson (Self-released)

**SHORT ATTENTION:*****Polished Turds*: 7"**

A twenty-six word review of a twenty-six song joke record filled with guest appearances. Condolences to the dead dinosaurs pressed into this waste of vinyl. RIP. —Paul J. Comeau (No Breaks)

**SIDETRACKED: *Wrench*: Cassette**

This is some pretty damn good music! Crunchy hardcore crossing Infest with East Coast burl. The blown-out recording sounds live and adds to the raw energy. Quick, urgent blasts that are over in a matter of seconds. I like the rattley low end of the bass—how it tends to dominate the sound—and how the drums sound busted to hell and back. Vocals are delivered in a desperate and rabid attack, heightening the intensity of their style. "Severed," which closes this out, is a total rager that has a catchy riff comparable to Black Flag. I needssss to hear more!!! —M.Avrq (To Live A Lie, tolivealie.com)

**SLACKERS, THE: *Sarah*: 7"**

This was offered as a bonus to supporters of The 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Ska Preservation Society Vinyl Reissue Project, but there's a few left for sale as well. Two new songs from their upcoming album and the title track (which originally came out on *Better Late than Never* on Moon Ska). Vic Ruggerio's voice has had me hooked for years. It manages to be rough and smooth at the same time, and always sexy as all get-out. My tolerance for so much of the ska came out in the '90s is limited since it was inescapable, but my love for the Slackers has never waned. They're solid, they're soulful, and I'll always seek it out. —Megan (Asbestos, asbestosrecords.wordpress.com / Underground Communique, undercomm.org)

**SLUG GUTS: *Stranglin You Too*: 7" EP**

A very Stoogey Iggy joins Savage Republic in a psychedelic reevaluation of the Cramps' early catalogue. Four tunes of primal, foot-stompin', reverbdone guitar gloriousness to do your ear hole just right. —Jimmy Alvarado (HoZac, hozacrerecords.com)

**SOCIAL CONFLICT:*****The World Against Us*: CD**

The eastside backyard scene has long been fertile ground from which numerous bands have spawned, made their noise of choice, and either withered on the vine or moved on to the greater music club scene. Just shy of their two-decade mark, Social Conflict are one of the backyards' elder statesmen still keeping a foot in the old stomping grounds—no strangers to club dates yet still not above gracing the odd backyard gig—and the scene's influence on the band is all over their latest release. What sets them apart from the pack, and quite frankly has set them apart almost since their inception, is their desire to push against the popular oom-PAH-oom-PAH thrash and post-post-quasi-"street punk" lyricism considered de rigueur amongst too many generations of local punk/hardcore bands. By occasionally lacing their frenetic rhythms with shards of psychedelia, utilizing the odd clean channel guitar and working with lyrics that address horrors both imagined and all too real with a bit more poeticism, they create a sound that is firmly rooted in the hardcore template, but isn't afraid to branch out and—HORRORS!—

show some creativity and originality. In addition to recording the basic tracks here, former Screamer Paul Roessler lends some keyboard work to an ace cover of his old band's "122 Hours of Fear," adding a nice bow on top of an already choice release. Play loud, play often, and play for pals. —Jimmy Alvarado (Innocence Lost)

**SPENT FLESH: *Self-titled*: 10"**

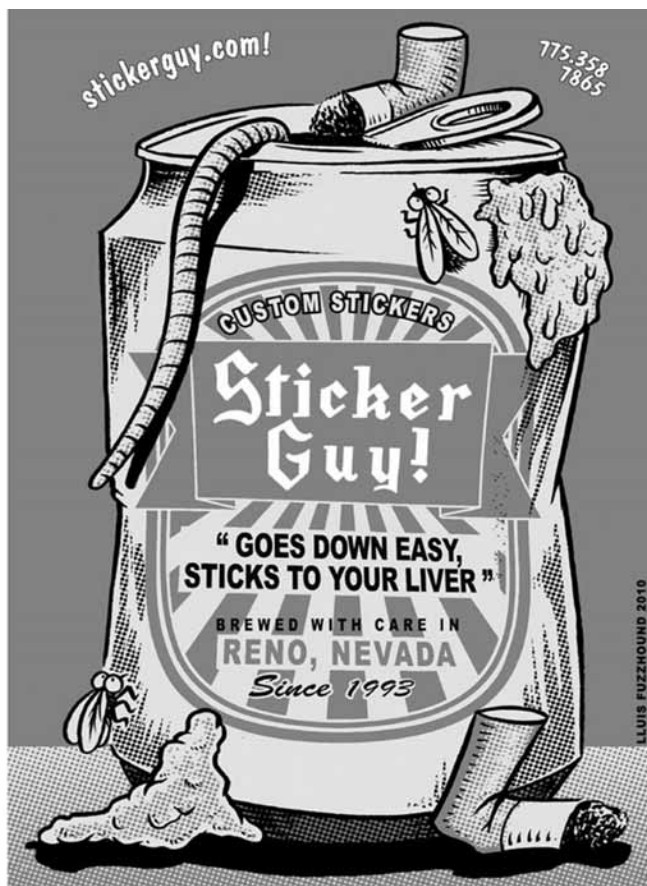
Jesus! What a glorious mess of a record. Super-spastic, thrashing, three-piece (no bassist) making half-belligerent, maddening music. Dean Dirg meets The Reatards in a bar in Philly. Possible musical inspiration: Slight Slappers, blenders, and benders. Totally righteously—andridiculously—fucked up and awesome. —Daryl (FDH / P. Trash / Sit & Spin)

**SPIDERBAGS: *Shake My Head*: CD**

Fairly middling barroom alt-rock stuff here. The loose, vaguely rootsy vibe of the music is fine enough, but the flat, laid back vocals give the whole thing a "Slash Records farm leaguers" feel. The most engaging song on here, "Shawn Cripps Boogie," is an instrumental with a repetitive, almost haunting structure that recalls the instrumental version of "Sound on Sound" on the Big Boys' *Wreck Collection*, but the rest is pretty unmemorable. —Jimmy Alvarado (Odessa)

**SQUISH: *Self-titled*: 7" EP**

Took me a few minutes of genius-me going, "Sweet minty Jesus, HoZac's





really pulling out all the weirdness stops with this one" before I realized I had it at the wrong speed. What I thought was a bit of drony minimalist art-punk brilliance turned out to be sloppy minimalist punk brilliance. It's good, but you'll have to excuse me while I slow it down to a crawl again.... —Jimmy Alvarado (HoZac)

#### STANDARD AND POOR:

##### **Let's Take Care of Our Own: 7" EP**

Leather-jackets-and-jeans-and-standing-against-a-brick-wall punk from Southern California, which puts them at a strategic disadvantage right off the bat since they don't really have brick walls against which to stand in earthquake zones, or so i've been told. The A-side is a sort of pseudo-UK melodic street punk anthem type deal, with ringy guitars and various exhortations and laments upon the state of domestic and foreign policy and such ("Let's take care of our own / if they need our help, I'm sure they'll phone"). B-side starts with "Let's Go"—a song that somehow manages to use the title of a Ramones song for a completely unrelated song about going to see the Ramones (*(fellows, please note this ship has sailed)*)—and ends with the best song of the bunch, "Love Knot," which is about tying up girls in the basement. No wonder they don't wanna go down there, daddy-o! I like this 45 better than that album with the pink cover they put out a while back; their star

is definitely in the ascendant. All they need are some bricks and they'll be on their way. **BEST SONG:** "Love Knot" **BEST SONG TITLE:** "Let's Go" i suppose. **FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT:** It says "All songs written *PREFORMED* and produced by *Standard and Poor*" in two separate places on the record packaging. —Rev. Norb (D-Spite My Height)

#### STATE OF MIND:

##### **Knowledge of Self: 12" EP**

Describing their sound as "groovy NY-styled hardcore," I was eager to put this 12" EP on the turntable. While I do pick up some traces of the influences they cite, the vibe on this EP is more generic radio rock-sounding than hardcore. The riffs were rather forgettable, easily fading to background noise every listen. Coupled with a very polished production, especially in the vocals, which had this echo-y middle-of-the-mix sound that I associate with commercial rock music, and the result was nothing that stuck with me on any level. While I support the band's "anti-racist, antifascist, religion-free, gay-positive, pro-choice, drug-free, and animal-friendly attitude," as stated in their description, and presented in their lyrics, musically this did very little for me. —Paul J. Comeau (Take It Back)

#### STOP BREATHING: Self-titled: CD

Fourteen quick bursts of hardcore with just the briefest hints of metal wicking underneath, mostly in those

guitar solos that weave in and out of the songs. Comparisons to Dr. Know and RKL definitely come to mind—it's *that* kind of frenzied hardcore. Comprised of folks from Glass And Ashes, The Missing 23<sup>rd</sup>, and The Fucking Wrath, Stop Breathing makes it all sound pretty effortless. It's all a little too ceaselessly ferocious for me personally, (I have grown old, old and weak, and keep waiting for them to change it up a bit) but again, they just nail it. Aesthetically, the best parts here are the cover photo, which is straight up brilliantly done, and the back logo, with the No Idea stressface and Doug Moody/Mystic Records skull mixed together. —Keith Rosson (No Idea)

#### STRAIGHTJACKET NATION:

##### **Self-titled: 7" EP**

Simple, potent, pissed-off hardcore—take a line or two of lyrics, set 'em to a riff, and beat both mercilessly for a minute or two. Repeat twice more. Works just fucking swell, thank you much. Three tunes, not a clunker here. —Jimmy Alvarado (Iron Lung)

#### STRONG INTENTION:

##### **Razorblade Express: 7"**

Several years ago, I acquired a copy of Strong Intention's debut album *Extermination Vision* through a blind trade and was completely blown away by their reckless disregard of speed limits ala fellow East Coast veterans Drop Dead. That was back in 2003 and while I was aware of the Maryland thrashers' constant touring,

I was not hip to the fact that since that full length they have only released one other split 7". No matter: they've not lost any of their edge and it seems as if taking their time between records has only made them even sharper. One stylistic change to note is their dabbling in the stoner/sludge territory which can probably be attributed to Michael IX Williams' (Eychategod) presence on two of the five tracks. But just when you think the bong rips are going to lead the charge, the thrashing of a lifetime ensues and doesn't stop until all the posers are laid to waste. Criminally underrated and rarely acknowledged in the underground, Strong Intention are the real deal, folks. —Juan Espinosa (Patac, patacrecords.com)

#### SUGAR STEMS: *Greatest Pretender: 7"*


Two tracks of cute and cuddly pop punk with vibrant, clean-toned guitars and a vocalist who sounds an awful lot like Cyndi Lauper at times. If you're into the power pop bands on Burger and worshiped the Dangerloves, then you're in for a treat. —Juan Espinosa (Certified PR, certifiedprrecords.com, sugarstems.com)

#### TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET:

##### **Freak Out!: CD**

This record defies all known rules of physics. I mean, there must be some really clean water in Wyoming. I have no other way to explain how Teenage Bottlerocket tops themselves with each new release. If you don't like songs

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with titles like "Cruising for Chicks" and "Punk House of Horror" then you may have a screw loose. "Never Gonna Tell You" is probably their catchiest tune since "Bloodbath at Burger King." That's saying something, folks. Do yourself a favor and pick this up, since you'll want to know all the words by the time they hit your town to blast the doors off the hinges live. I know I do. —Sean Koeppenick (Fat Wreck)

**TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET:**  
**Freak Out!: CD**

Wow, this CD is like listening to two different bands. One rocks a humorous Hanson Brothers vibe complete with clever—bordering on hilarious—lyrics and the other leans towards a more pop than punk sound that I couldn't get into. I imagine that there are two distinct songwriters at work here, as the songs bounce back and forth between the two styles. It is all done well though, I would just personally prefer more of the clever, funny stuff and less of the poppy love songs. —Garrett Barnwell (Fat)

**TELEDROME: Double Visions: 7" EP**

A melding of punk guitar slash, new wave synth, and drum machine, the five tracks offered up here give brief (nary a one hits the two-minute mark) glimpses into an alternate reality where black-clad denizens get their boogie on like the night won't ever end. The mix could use a little less lo-fi and a bit more low-end punch, but, at the end of that day, that's like bitching that the peach you're

eating ain't quite "peachy" enough. —Jimmy Alvarado (HoZac)

**TERRIBLE FEELINGS: Shadows: LP**

I have been hearing a buzz about this band for sometime now. But as usual, I come into the picture late. I heard a couple of tracks off this LP online and I couldn't believe how good this band is. The songs were infectious and I needed more! I downloaded this LP, three EPs, and the demo. To let people know that I do not download maliciously, I ordered all the records from various distros the same day. I am still a bit of a record nerd, even though my purchasing has tapered lately. I haven't been this giddy about a band in a while. The entire record from start to finish is a wonderful aural experience. Not one song is filler. Each song differs from the other yet compliments one another. I just can't seem to nail in my head all of what I'm hearing. I hear a bit of '60s garage punk, surf, post punk, and the darkness of death rock. But all the songs contain a catchy melody that makes them instantly likable. The guitars add texture and a moody atmosphere. The vocalist, Manuela, writes introspective and dark lyrics that she delivers with power and conviction. I keep thinking she has the vocal pipes of someone extraordinary like Grace Slick, and, at other times, like Celtic artist Loreena McKennitt. But that doesn't perfectly identify her since she really stands on her own. Production benefits the drums

and bass here. Both are delivered with impacting power. I have read and heard complaints that the LP is a bit too sleek and polished. I have to disagree with that. It adds to the growth of their music and showcases them with precision. It would not surprise me that this band crosses over and gains a larger audience. This band, to me, is that good. Hearing their discography backwards, the demo has a loose punk feel. The production is raw and vocalist Manuela's delivery is less controlled, with more spite and snot. Come the first EP, she finds her voice and delivers it with such magic. Now my quest is to find a physical copy of the demo and possibly get the Japanese EP compilation. —Donofthedeath (Deranged)

**TIMMY'S ORGANISM:**  
**Raw Sewage Roq: LP**

Burner alert! Timmy's Organism is Timmy Vulgar's project (formerly of The Clone Defects and Human Eye). Album slays. Like John Wesley Coleman, Vulgar pulls lyrics from the most unexpected places—like childhood memories of watching Clint Eastwood movies. Stoked "Mind over Matter" is included on the LP (a different version appeared on a Goner split with JWC III). Song has some of the best lyrics ever penned: "Eating outta a garbage can/I don't need responsibility, man." Timmy's on another trip. He can cook amazing Mexican food. Record awesome albums. Dress amazingly. Dude rules

at life. Pick this record up, pronto! —Ryan Leach (In The Red)

**TOM 77: Příšel čas: CD**

At first I thought this Czech (?) band would be fairly typical Eastern European punk, but I was so very, very wrong. The best way to think of this is to picture a Czech incarnation of New Model Army with a bit more Irish influence in the songwriting. This is a really solid record, and if you're into that sound you may well like what you'll hear. However, the New Model Army comparisons stop with the music. Since none of the songs are sung in English, I can neither confirm nor deny that the lyrical content has the same delicious bitterness that pervades NMA's songs. Good stuff. —The Lord Kveldufr (PHR)

**TONY SLY & JOEY CAPE:**  
**Acoustic: Volume Two: CD**

Just a week before I had to turn this in to Todd, I got the shocking news of Tony Sly's death on August 1, 2012. I had a completely different review written prior to hearing about his passing, but now I'd like to say that although I wasn't a huge fan of No Use For A Name, I was a budding fan of Tony Sly's solo work which was more than folk punk, more than a former frontman flying solo. While I know I'm supposed to be writing a review here, I'd like to point to Tony's diverse body of work: eight records with No Use For A Name, two solo albums, Scorpios, a collaborative work

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#### TROUBLED SLEEP: *Poltergeist: 7"*

This second EP from a quartet out of Brooklyn dish up four new tracks with fresh, unadorned female vocals and early '90s left-of-center indie rock structures. Borrowing from My Bloody Valentine and The Breeders' stripped-down tunes, Troubled Sleep is straight up college, coffee house rock. "Teenage Everything" adds a chorus of male vocals lending a layer to their Wonderbread sound. While it's still early in the game for Troubled Sleep, this oughta ease you into your morning. —Kristen K. (Ripe, riperiperiperipe.com)

#### TRUE RADICAL MIRACLE: *Termites: LP*

Lumbering and sinister music that is darker than dark—even more so during a long mid-day summer afternoon listening. The raspy vocals have a hot and dusty quality about them, as words are shouted and sometimes delivered with a gritting output. It's as though the vocalist is reaching down deep and getting the lyrics out through some intense pain. The music is heavy without being overwrought

and misanthropic in tone without beating you over the head. Not a common approach these days. Instead of stomping, kicking, and slobbering all over themselves in impotent anger, the songs peel away a little with every pass, revealing a darkness that cannot be pinned down. The guitars ring out and sometimes bash over rolling percussion. The bass snakes around real shifty and casts shadows in places where there shouldn't be shadow. It's the sort of music you "crawl inside" and let it consume you, blocking out the surroundings, as you soak in your malaise. Excellent record. One of my favorites for summer listening. —M.Avrq (Iron Lung)

#### TY SEGALL BAND:

##### *Slaughterhouse: CD*

Bad garage is like bad grindcore or bad ska. With enough equipment, volume, and grooming, people are fooled easily enough. These modes are also three easy entrances into music. With garage, especially psyche, after all the pedals are bought and the instruments and haircuts are fussed over, good bands go on to tackle the ghosts, addictions, habits, sinew, miracles of headspace and timespace, the danger and dissolve, the tightened fists and skyless nights. One has to offer more than surface gloss, price tags, and logos if quality's a consideration. The Ty Segall Band's captured something powerful in *Slaughterhouse*. It's hard to pinpoint and that's where the pleasure in repeated listens is coming from. It's

a bad trip in the best way. The playing's powerful, precise, and fucking huge. It sounds like it's dragging chains and there's no muffler on the exhaust. Dark star exploding. Not much light's escaping despite the tremendous velocity. Jeez, this is great stuff. Hey Emily. —Todd (In The Red)

#### TYRED EYES: *The Piercing Eyes, the Thousand Lies: LP*

What is it about Scandinavia? Back in the day it was the raw hardcore.... then recently we've had the joys of Smalltown, No Hope For The Kids, Gorilla Angreb, Knugen Faller, Vicious, and a host of other youngsters banging out stuff that sounds unmistakably "Scandinavian" but has originality bursting from the seams. This Gothenburg band takes pieces of all the above bands, melding knowledge of the past but with something new and vibrant. Sounding somehow familiar yet fresh and new. This band takes everything I love about bands from Sweden and Denmark and blend them with current West Coast heroes like Toys That Kill. Songs of drinking, firing squads, and not liking anyone work just fine for me. It's rough and raw but the male/female vocals give it a certain sweetness that acts like the ginger back to your Fernet shot. This is one of those gems you'll have to make an effort to track down. Trust me; it's worth the effort. —Tim Brooks (Alleycat, alleycatrecords.se)

#### VARIOUS ARTISTS:

##### *Discharge Tribute: CD*

Usually, tribute compilations aren't my thing. Yet, for some reason, I seem to really enjoy Discharge tributes. I still have, and listen to, the "Discharged" comp from Allied Records from about twenty years ago. And this, the latest in Discharge trib comp, is pretty damn good and has been in constant rotation in my fallout shelter for a good couple months. All the bands on here are from Brazil and are definitely inspired by the reason for this compilation. Some stay true to the song, and others put their own stamp on it, such as Apokalyptic Raids doing slowed down version of "Decontrol." Disarm seem to channel early Black Flag and mix it in their D-beat on "Religion Instigates." Nuclear Frost put a bit of a minimalist spin on "The End" while retaining the abrasive edge and churning bass. Corja slow it down with some near rock'n'roll and jazz vibe in their punk on "Anger Burning." Then you have bands like Karnekrua (I need to hear more from these guys!), Armageddon, Social Chaos, Acao Direta who hand in some raging versions that are worth the price of admission alone. Seriously, when the bands are raging, this stuff is f'n great. Not only do you get some awesome bands on here, this comes packaged with a lyrics sheet that folds out to a Discharge poster on the other side. —M.Avrq (Terrotten, terrotten@terrotten.com)

#### VARIOUS ARTISTS:

##### *From Russia with Hate: CD*

I fell out of the heavy and speed metal

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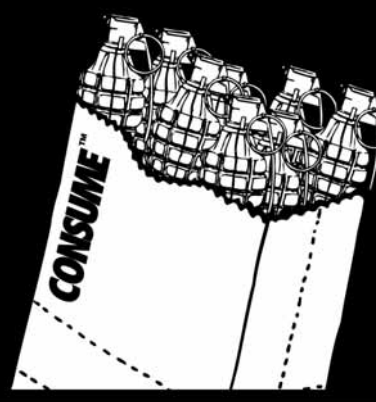
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scene when I was fifteen or so, but I still have a soft spot (irony!) in my heart for the genre. I lot of what I hear these days, especially on regional comps such as this, is gaggingly one-dimensional; hearing one band on the comp is more or less the same as hearing any other band on the record. That was not, I am damn pleased to say, the case with this outing. *From Russia with Hate* features fifteen bands who have all parachuted squarely into the black metal drop zone. The stereotypically “evil” names across the board are a dead giveaway but there is a surprising diversity of sounds among those bands. Some of the tunes are fairly typical black metal offerings, and yes, there is an abundance of cookie monster vocals, but even those garden-variety metal bands were actually pretty good at such garden-variety songs. Some of the songs bore the musical tattoo of Napalm Death pretty clearly, and some even strayed towards the anarcho-punk border, bearing gifts for Amebix and Discharge. My personal favorite, “Metal Zombies” by Blood Pollution, is highly reminiscent of *Kill ‘Em All*-era Metallica, and that sound fucking rules. So if you’re into black metal, check this out. If you don’t like black metal and somebody happens to play this for you, give it a try. —The Lord Kveldufr (Wings Of Destruction, wod-prods@mail.ru)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Inxcomplexite: 7***  
Jeebus, where to begin: the packaging for this 7” compilation is a complete monstrosity. You have a plain white

album jacket screen printed with the track listing on the back cover. The front cover is adorned with a random 12”, also screened but is completely useless since the music is contained on a separate 7” whose dust sleeve is glued onto a black piece of paper sized to fit inside the 12”. Frustrated yet? You also get a turntable mat (whether you need it or not, and let’s face it: you don’t.) All this nonsense almost makes the CD inside a 7” sleeve a good idea. Shitty packaging aside, this is actually a pretty solid comp featuring In Defence, Sick Mess, Guns N Rosa Parks, Instant Asshole, and the mighty Conga Fury leading the way. As you can imagine, the bands are all of the hardcore/thrash/what-have-you variety with the whole comp breezing by in a matter of minutes. A musically decent comp with terrible artwork equates to: meh. It is what it is. —Juan Espinosa (World Won’t Listen)

**VENENO LENTO: Self-titled: EP**  
Excellent record! Tuneful and driving punk rock from these guys. There’s a definite U.K. influence, but not a starry-eyed knock off. You can hear it in the guitar playing and some of the riffs, which sound inspired by the likes of Steven Kent (the Business) and Nicky Garratt (U.K. Subs). The songs are mid tempo and catchy. You get some fist pumpers like “Eu Não Quero!” and the awesome “Meu Caminho O Inferno” (definitely one of my favorite songs of the summer—the guitar riff, the chorus, and the backing vocals that

come in at the end—whoa!), then there are some slightly slower songs like “Arprisionado” and “Garotos De Rua” to let you catch your breath. Brazil has a lot of high quality bands lately. Oh how I’d love to go down there and witness it firsthand... —M.Avrq (Nada Nada, info@nadanadadiscos.com)

**VERLAINES, THE:  
*Untimely Meditations*: CD**

I think Graeme Downes has lost his mind. The longtime Verlaines frontman is known for obtuse lyrics, unusual arrangements, and vocals that slalom between the melodic and the challenging. I’m familiar with most of the band’s previous nine studio albums and there isn’t one like *Untimely Meditations* in the bunch. At first I thought it was going to be a more direct record. The opening song, “Born Again Idiot,” has lyrics I could grasp on first listen and a great guitar riff that went right from A to B. All right, I thought, let the Verlaines make a more commercial album. They’ve paid their dues over the past thirty years, let ‘em indulge. How wrong I was. This record swerves wildly, not just from song to song but within songs. Horns that sound like Van Morrison. Guitar lines like Steely Dan. A boozy rhythm section that calls to mind the Kinks early ‘70s days on RCA. Sounds awful right? Even if you dig one or more of those elements, they have no right being in the same beaker. I think Graeme Downes is crazy for trying and genius for pulling it off. It’ll take me

months to wrap my head around all ten tracks, but I’ll be trying. —Mike Faloon (Flying Nun, flyingnun.co.nz)

**VERSE:  
*Bitter Clarity, Uncommon Grace*: CD**  
From the very beginning of their existence, Verse has been a band to push the boundaries of what is modern hardcore, forging a distinct and recognizable sound unlike anything else out there. Their first two albums, 2004’s *Rebuild*, and 2006’s *From Anger and Rage* have special places in my heart not only for personal reasons, but because they are two of the finest hardcore records of all time. With *Bitter Clarity, Uncommon Grace*, Verse returns with their first album since reuniting and unleash one of their finest records to date. The sound that the band developed on their first two records—and refined on 2008’s *Aggression*, their third LP—reaches its finest expression on this recording. The raw, searing riffs and brooding melodic riffs for which Verse is known are all here in abundance, with an increased level of guitar wankery and technicality thrown in the mix, as in the track “The Relevance of Our Disconnect,” one of my favorites on the album. It’s impossible to discuss a Verse album without talking about the lyrics. Vocalist Sean Murphy is one of my favorite lyricists, for his deeply personal and fiery political lyrics. The two are bound together tightly on almost every song on *Bitter Clarity*. My favorites include the previously mentioned “The Relevance of Our Disconnect,” from

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which the name of the album is derived, "Finding a Way out When There Is No Way," and "The Silver Spoon and The Empty Plate." The last of these finds Murphy at his most direct, in terms of political expression with the chorus "Police are pigs, [and all] justice is blind / greedy men in suits only serve to divide," words to which I think everyone reading this can scream along. While critics might be down on the band for breaking up and reuniting, questioning the legitimacy of their current run, let me annihilate all of them right now. *Bitter Clarity*, *Uncommon Grace* is the real deal, a defining statement from a band that still has a lot to say, and a record we're all sure to be listening to and discussing for years to come. —Paul J. Comeau (Bridge 9)

#### VICTIMS FAMILY: *Have a Nice Day!* 7"

Been hearing the name for a long time, but never heard the band, so pardon my lack of context in this review. Victims Family (Victim's Family with an apostrophe?) have a sound that is born of the mid-'80s, when metal and punk crossed over with prog and funk bleeding in. But these guys don't sound like a bunch of mooks. They do fascinating, noodly shit on the guitar and work it into quick-moving, tuneful songs. Would suggest for fans of All, Minutemen, and even Primus. —Chris Terry (Alternative Tentacles)

#### VINCAS: *Blood Bleeds*: LP

The album reminds me a lot of Nick Cave's early band The Birthday Party.

I'm sure these guys have to be sick of the Nick Cave reference, but it's a fair cop. The songs are comprised of dark, bass-heavy riffs. The singer has a deep, resonant howl that surges to the music. It's hard to pull something like this off without sounding derivative. The album has a lot of energy and they do it well. People who can't get enough of that Birthday Party sound would enjoy this, for sure. —Billups Allen (Douchemaster)

#### WALLS: *The Future Is Wide Open*: LP

I guess you could say this is "post-hardcore" or "post-rock" or something of that nature. Listening to this definitely takes me back to the late-'80s/early-'90s, a time when bands like Unsane and Cop Shoot Cop were cranking out some hard and heavy sounds without falling into any one category. Depending on how far you have your head shoved up your hardcore purist or trendy power violence ass depends on how much you might cotton to this record. The tempos are mainly on the mid tempo and nervous pacing side, with some blasts of speed and cranium-bashing percussion here and there, while the guitars are as equally anguished and strangled-sounding as the vocals. This is the soundtrack of a heat wave and residing in a greasy, roach-infested studio apartment with no air conditioner or fan to bring any relief. All you can think about is that list of motherfuckers who need to get what's coming to them. Listen to "A Piece of Rope" with its lumbering

and repetitive bass line. The guitar sort of rings out and hangs in the air while the singer bellows about "A cord! A piece of rope. A wire..." Allow yourself to get consumed in the blackness of "The Tears of a Lonely Man" and "Cheap Equipment." Walls achieve that sound and that feeling of anger, despair, and being completely lost in this world without coming off contrived or whiny. Pretty damn good. A nice companion to have around at the end of the day when everyone and everything else just sets you on edge. —M.Avr (Iron Lung)

#### WAR ON WOMEN:

##### *Improvised Weapons*: 10"

War On Women is a co-ed feminist hardcore punk band hailing from Baltimore, MD—a city currently brimming with great bands—and after only a few listens to this 10", I'd say it's safe to add WOW to that list. Playing a brand of aggressive garage punk that features melodic riffs with an abrasive edge and female vocals that alternate between singing, shouting, and spoken-word passages, I found each song really damn catchy. I gleaned a positive feminist message in much of vocalist Shawna Potter's lyrics, which I dug, though I would have appreciated a lyric sheet with the record to grasp everything she sang. Overall though, I enjoyed this record, and would love to hear more from the band. —Paul J. Comeau (Exotic Fever, waronwomenwow@gmail.com)

#### WAR//PLAGUE:

##### *On a Darker Dawn*: LP

Heavy and dark stuff here. Metallic crusty hardcore with a political conscious coded in apocalyptic lyrics. The dual guitar piles on layers of darkness and creates a feeling of unease and despair when one solos over the main riff of the other. It's as though the world is about to plunge into an era of darkness. The opening of "Harvest" is great. Very on the metal side, with the down tuned guitars—and build up from the rest of the band—it creates a tension that is slowly released with every measure. When they hit the riff after the first verse and let it hang for a minute —yeah! At times they can be overdramatic, such as on the ending of "Pack of 1,000 Wolves," where you hear wolves howling and the vocalist spitting out "One!" a few times. But other than that, and it's a minor carping really, this record is pretty good. They create a mood and hold it. The musicianship is solid as hell. I'm pretty damn jaded when it comes to this style, especially after years of it dominating the L.A. area with not very good bands. War//Plague are definitely not a clone band. They breathe some new life into the genre. —M.Avr (Profane Existence, profaneexistence.com)

#### WARM NEEDLES: *Pretty Tambo*: 7"

Anthemic and catchy Long Island punk rock that reminds me of a bunch of Tampa bands like Tim

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Version, Dukes Of Hillsborough, and so on. Good stuff. —Chris Mason (Tour Van)

#### WASTELAND: Self-titled: LP

Five years in the making, Wasteland's posthumous full-length record is finally here, and it's one epic slab of vinyl. Featuring current and former members of Soul Control, Relics, Mean Man's Dream, and other Western Mass stalwarts, Wasteland tear through ten tracks of raw, blistering hardcore. Thick, chunky bass lines and guitar riffs that alternate between furious assaults and soaring melodies meet with thundering drums and throat-blistering vocals on each of these tracks. I dug the sharp political themes covered in the lyrics, especially in the track "In the Shadow of No Towers," but would have been okay with a few less f-bombs. Not only is the LP a great listen, but it also comes with a download code for the entire Wasteland discography, remixed and remastered! Overall, this is an excellent document of a band that went too soon. —Paul J. Comeau (Clean Plate)

#### WEIRD PARTY:

##### *The Secret Lives of Men: 7"*

Four catchy songs laden with overdriven guitar riffs and reverb-heavy vocals. "I Don't Want You to Know" rocks with a bit of roots influence while the other songs are a

bit more chaotic. The guitar playing reminds me of noisier '90s punk. Good stuff. —Billups Allen (Twistworthy)

#### WHITE LOAD:

##### *"Pig Eyes" b/w "Little Black Pig": 7"*

Two rambunctious garagey-punk tunes hamstrung by a production quality that renders both into overblown walls of shit. —Jimmy Alvarado (Ken Rock, myspace.com/kenrockrecords)

#### WHITE LUNG: Sorry: LP

What's up, Canada? I guess being so far away from stuff in the "real" world, you just make up your own shit right? I first heard these gals (and token dude) back on the *Emergency Broadcast* Vancouver comp and they were cool an' all, but I guess I snoozed on their next few records cos this LP is a banger—a crazy mix of '90s-era K rock stuff like Slant 6, Sleater Kinney, or even some of my fave gal-fronted bands from the U.K. like Joyce McKinney Experience, but with a fierce hardcore backbone and almost Ginn-esque lead breaks. I can't stand artsy off-key shit, so trust me, this shit works. It's hard as a bag of hammers, but these cats have kept the hooks way up front and the song lengths at a breathy two minutes that works just fine for old fucks like me with goldfish-like attention spans. First listen grabs you by the neck and chokes you out, but further listens peel back more than the initial attack with complicated song structures and melodies. This

recording kills and is as good as anything I've heard this year. Way to start my Razorcake review career. Boss. —Tim Brooks (Deranged)

#### YDINTUHO / KYLMÄ SOTA:

##### *Split: 7" EP*

Both bands crank out Discharge-influenced hardcore with HISSSSSS guitars, ramped up tempos, and over-the-top delivery like only Scandinavians can pull off. Kylmä Sota at times sounds a bit like prime-era Rattus. Ydintuho wears the Discharge influences on their sleeves the most of the two, but neither sounds like they're going outta their way to fit into the Dis-hole, which is as it should be. —Jimmy Alvarado (Psychadelica)

#### YOUNG GUV & THE SCUZZ:

##### *A Love Too Strong: LP*

Holy shit...this is disgustingly good. Über-catchy, action-syrup pop rock entering my brain like there's an IV going from my tuner to my arm. It's potent and addictive; and I love it. The Young Governor recordings are always interesting, but seldom would I consider them mandatory: solo home recordings that must be a great escape from the world of Canadian cable television appearances and corporate "indie rock" showcases that Ben is obligated to partake in due to his role as third guitarist in Fucked Up. But with *A Love Too Strong* he's decided to assemble a backing band of breathtakingly

talented musicians, enter a studio, and lay down six tracks of the most pristinely orchestrated pop you can find anywhere. The end result is incredibly reminiscent of Marvelous Darlings minus the power pop/glam swagger. Just track after track of brilliantly executed pop perfection that sounds effortless. This isn't background pop music though, it's commanding. Young Guv & The Scuzz aren't here for you to nod off to. If you're in it for the good time, get your hands on this record.

—Daryl (Southpaw, southpawdistro@yahoo.com)

#### ZOO PARTY: You Must Be Joking: CD

Another album of tasty, driving punk rock from these Swedes. At times sounding like the Damned with a bit more "street" added, they dish up some catchy tunes with "old school" tinges and none of the mothballs. Like last time, OG punker pals Glenn Matlock and Brian James provide the occasional guitar part, adding a bit of flair to the fist-pumpin' anthems presented here. —Jimmy Alvarado (Devil, devilrec@hotmail.com)

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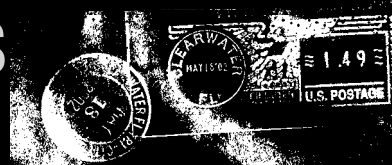
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**“Why would a  
dude go through  
all of the trouble of  
making a zine just  
to tell the world  
that he likes sex and  
football?”**

—Lauren Trout  
LOOSE LEAF #1

## ANARCHIST BICYCLE RALLY: CONFIDENTIAL MAD LIBS \$4, 5½" x 7", offset, 62 pgs.

This one's kind of weird. It's a collection of records of the police spying on Critical Mass in Portland obtained through the Freedom of Information Act going back as far as 1997. The intro implies that these might be interesting to read because the cops are so stupid, or whatever, but I can't see anybody reading it for shits and giggles. Some of the reports are redone as Mad Libs "to make it fun... and so you will actually read it," but it doesn't really seem to work. I guess it's just confusing for me. I mean, I think it's cool they got this information and put it out there. We need to know The Man is monitoring us and all, yet, I just can't see anyone sitting down to read this. It doesn't seem right to say, "Why didn't they just put it online?", but I fail to see who the audience for this would be. It's like a zine version of the *Pentagon Papers* or Watergate Tapes. If you want to know the pigs have sixty pages of reports on Critical Mass, they do. If you want to read them all, they're available in this slick zine for a good price. —Craven Rock (Cantankerous Titles, Joe Biel, PO Box 14332, Portland, OR 97293, cantankeroustitles.com)

## BIPEDAL, BY PEDAL #3, \$4, 4½" x 7", offset, 42 pgs.

This is a nicely designed zine that continues the history of bicycle activism in Portland, Oregon, that was found in the two previous issues. This particular issue focuses on the history of Critical Mass (the monthly bicycle riding event held in cities all over the world that some see as a protest, and others, as a celebration of bicycling) in Portland. Author, Joe Biel, has written a fairly extensive history of the movement in Portland from its beginnings to where it stopped in the latter part of the '00s. This is certainly written from the bicyclists' points of view, noting the times they had been wronged and their complaints with Portland's police crackdown. Some of these things, if true, show the police

completely inept in going after Critical Mass as an anarchist terror group. In that sense, as many details as Biel goes into, it would have been nice to see some citations or further resources for those not as familiar with what is happening in Portland. Perhaps it's the academic in me, but when you're writing about personal experiences, that's one thing. When you make accusations against police and elected officials, it would be nice to have some sources to back them up. That's not to say I doubt Biel's findings per se, but with some cited evidence, this could be a much stronger argument. This would assist in a need for review—not just Portland's response to Critical Mass—but the way large swaths of their police department operate. As it stands, it's an interesting document, but one I'm not sure will be of much interest to those outside of bicyclists, Critical Mass supporters (or detractors, I suppose), and residents of Portland. —Kurt Morris (microcosmpublishing.com)

## FIFTH ESTATE Vol. 47 No. 2, 8" x 10", offset, 47 pgs.

This is the Anarchist Summer Reading issue. There are lots of book reviews of radical literature that are informative but over-intellectually couched and dry; so dry that I am hesitant to read any of their recommendations, lest they be just as boring. I'm not against this magazine by any means, but man, you need a pack of throat lozenges next to you in order to get through it. I don't understand radical writing that's stuck in the collegiate high tower. I mean, I *understand* it... (usually after going back and reading passages over and over again), I just don't understand why they feel that's the best way to communicate. It's not even writing that can be *appreciated* as good or bad, it's just academic writing. Hell, I have a thousand magazines and books like this laying around which I'll never read just because they're dull as fuck. There. Now that I got that out, there were a lot of insightful articles in here. I really liked John Zerzan's essay in defense of the Black Bloc, as well

as the article on "Anarchism and the Anti-Authoritarian Personality," which proposed that political radicals are a certain *type* of person who live a freer life by not taking jobs seriously. They are the semi-proletariat that understands "time's language" and thus move within life more freely and riskfully. They are in tune with more natural rhythms than just punching a clock (a personality that is more applicable to these times of unemployment and temp exploitation). I really liked that one. Then there was stuff on the Occupy movement, legalization of gays in the military, a radical college called Corvid, and one on the history of debt that goes back to the beginning of civilization. I don't mean to be too hard on *Fifth Estate*, as some of the articles were accessible and enjoyable to read. The rest I'm glad I read for the information I gleaned from them. I'm just frustrated with the fact that political writing either has to be hyper-educated or immensely readable and grandiosely ignorant like Crimethinc. I recommend this; I just had to get my two low-brow, service-earned cents in. —Craven Rock (Fifth Estate, PO Box 201016, Ferndale, MI 48220)

## HOTET FRAN SKORGANA \$15, 8½" x 5½", printed, 24 pgs.

This looks to be a companion piece to a compilation LP/CD. Half of the zine is in Swedish, and if you flip it over, the other half is in English. I appreciated that immensely, seeing how I cannot read Swedish. All of the bands appear to be from the city of Östersund, a relatively smallish city (twenty-fourth largest in Sweden) of 60,000 people or so. This fact is what I find so amazing. Here is a group of bands, many of whom share members, who have their shit together enough to record and put out a compilation LP. Sometimes I think we take it for granted how difficult of a task that can be. Nevertheless, a cool zine with some rockin' bands like Grundskolan, Brotskod 11, Heroimissbruk, and Thrashers. —Steve Hart (hotetfranskogarna@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SITUATIONISTS, AN, Free, 8½" x 5½", photocopied, 23 pgs.

The Situationist International was a group from 1957-1972 who were known for their radical political theory and influence on the 1968 student and workers revolt in France by members of the University of Strasbourg Student Union. The zine covers the origins, ideals, and major events of the Situationist International until their disbandment in 1972. It's a great and interesting read for history buffs like me. You can see how long the struggle against capitalism and politics have been going on, and how the situation has changed. —James Meier (Jan D. Matthews, The Anarchist Library, theanarchistlibrary.org)

## LAST NIGHT AT THE CASINO #3, \$3, 8½" x 5½", 47 pgs.

If you read zines, and if you're doing it right, then you like learning about lives that are completely different than yours. That's exactly what Billy gives you here—tiny short stories about what it's like working as a dealer in a casino: punk rock bosses, regulars, and working the late shift. —Katie Dunne (iknowbilly@gmail.com)

## LOOSE LEAF #1, \$2, 5½" x 8½", copied, 12 pgs.

Why would a dude go through all of the trouble of making a zine just to tell the world that he likes sex and football? It comes across like he's trying really hard to fit into the beer commercial stereotype of how guys should act. Every page has to mention something like breast implants, admiring thongs, being an "ass man," etc. It's almost like he's trying to convince everybody that he's definitely a man and he's definitely into women. Okay dude, you're heterosexual. We believe you. Now talk about something else. You're making yourself look bad. —Lauren Trout (mylooseleaf@gmail.com)

**MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL #341,**  
\$4, 8½" x 11", newsprint, 136 pgs.  
This is a punk zine, kind of like *Razorcake*, but not nearly as cool.



They're taking a quantity-over-quality approach and it's not really working. There isn't much to talk about in the way of art or graphic design. The text is super small and the photographs don't have enough visual interest to make up for it. This isn't their first issue, but they still made some beginner mistakes like a clunky title and a flimsy newsprint cover. It's hard to explain the overall vibe because it's lacking one. I think that they should work on showing more personality beyond "punk" in general, because I can't really tell who this would appeal

live in the same apartment complex and hang out together, not a creative writing club at a private college. Then again, it's printed professionally, has an ISSN, and is copyrighted. Maybe those are better indicators than my guesses about the authors' intentions. Maybe I should just get on with telling you about the content instead of trying to define the difference between zines and literary journals. My favorites were a nostalgic narrative by Valery Petrovsky, a minivan-themed essay by Jesse Sugarmann and Chris Engman, and a reflection on

away while their world collapses around them. It's a very powerful story, and although it's hard to criticize dialogue, I found one particular word distracting. Maybe that's just me, but when I read the words, "fucking Jew," I tend to distrust the author. However, I was moved by the story. There's a show review of a band called Earthless that was very similar to many of my experiences going to shows by myself. The inner-dialogue and the astonishment at the people attending the show is something I related to.

**RUBBERNECK #4**, \$6, 8½" x 11", printed, 36 pgs.

Awesome photo mag documenting the Austin, Texas rock/punk scene (also includes touring bands like Cheap Time). Layout is nice and clean and the paper stock is of incredibly high quality. A lot of work goes into each one of these mags; tons of bands make appearances (Golden Boys, A Giant Dog, etc.). This issue of *Rubberneck* contains record reviews and some advice on trash-rock extraordinaire John Wesley Coleman (who has a possible future in life coaching). Buy

**"*Rubberneck* has none of that cheesy shit where the band members are standing on rocks in the middle of nowhere holding their respective instruments, or lined up against the wall of some graffiti-covered alleyway looking tough."**

—M.Avrq | *RUBBERNECK #2*

to. Maybe people just scan through this looking for a mention of a band that they like, but I can't imagine that anyone actually reads this thing cover-to-cover. Hopefully, the writers and editors are the kind of people who can take constructive criticism to heart, because I think they need to put in a lot more effort to make a quality zine. —Lauren Trout (PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146)

**MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL #350**,

\$4, 8½" x 11", newsprint, 164 pgs. I always enjoy *MRR*, but this was a particularly cool issue. Focusing on punk photography, it was great to see archival photos and read interviews with folks like Christine Boarts-Larsen, Justine Demetrick, and Jeanne Hansen, among others. No band interviews this time around, just photographers (pretty rad), as well as the usual columns (and this issue's were exceptionally good—the majority of them remaining contextual to punk, and generally pretty thought-provoking), reviews, etc. Like most punk "institutions," *MRR* gets ragged on a lot, but this current incarnation of staff seems both thoughtful and impassioned. Awesome work all around. Now if they'd just nerd out someday on a "punk design" issue, I'd be stoked. —Keith Rosson (*MRR*, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146)

**MONARCH #1**, \$12 ppd.,

5½" x 8½", printed, 69 pgs. Heads up: this isn't a proper zine, it's a literary journal. In my mind, the difference is that a literary journal is just a vessel for aspiring writers to get their name out without regard for DIY ethics. But this one actually came together with more of a DIY spirit: it's written by people who all

*Nevermind*'s twenty-fifth anniversary by Caleb Thompson. I find that slice-of-life writing easier to relate to than the rest of the pieces in this journal: fiction stories about Charles Bukowski and Justin Bieber, as well as plenty of poetry. I have a personal vendetta against that medium, but I'll give these guys some credit because their poetry isn't too abstract to make sense. This is good for a first issue, but in my totally biased opinion, it would be cooler if it was a zine instead of a journal. The price would be way lower if they made photocopies instead of going to a printer. The white space could be filled with cut- and-paste backgrounds to add some visual interest. The authors could add more personal experiences to their stories and take out the bios that list their published works. I'd much rather get an idea of their backgrounds by reading stories that incorporate biographical information than by reading bios that come across like a list of credentials. I approve of the concept of a community pitching in to make a literary journal, but I think that the editors need to step it up for future editions. The editor's job is to mediate between what the writers want and what the readers want. They gave the authors their part: their name and work printed in a good-looking journal. Now they need to consider what the readers might want. —Lauren Trout (themonarchreview.com)

**RADVOCATE, THE #2**,

8½" x 5½", printed, 38 pgs. I opened this zine to a story entitled, "We Listen to Metal." It's kind of near the middle of the zine, which is not something I would normally do, but it caught my eye and I started reading. It is a story of a young girl and her father, who is slowly wasting

This also features an essay from a photographer and a professional rollerblader (something I did not know existed). —Steve Hart (The Advocate, 3245 University Ave., Ste. 1430, San Diego, CA 92104)

**RUBBERNECK #2**, \$8 ppd.,

8½" x 11", printed, 40 pgs. *Rubberneck* is a photazine of all Austin, Texas bands. You get some live shots and some portraits of bands like Flesh Lights, OBN III's, Planets, Wiccans, Creamers, Manikin, Rayon Beach, and the rest. I must say, as for band portraits, these are some of the better ones I've ever seen, they're very sensibly composed. *Rubberneck* has none of that cheesy shit where the band members are standing on rocks in the middle of nowhere holding their respective instruments, or lined up against the wall of some graffiti-covered alleyway looking tough. Instead, they're simple and natural, such as the photo of Jake Garcia from The Ripe with his face pressed against the fence, or the photo of Dustin Coffey from Shapes Have Fangs on the left-hand page with his hands pushing his face in different directions. My favorite live shots are of the Bad Sports, The Stuffers, Love Collector, Planets, Bill Jeffery, and The Wax Museums (the distorted face is awesome!). Looking at these photos it's very apparent the photographers Renate Winter and Jon Chamberlain are very passionate and heavily involved in their local scene, which allows for the intimacy of many of the subjects. I'm inspired and envious looking at this—very well worth your time. —M.Avrq (rubberneckzine@gmail.com, rubberneckzine.com)

the mag. Keep it. Then sell it on eBay ten years down the line. Or just keep it and appreciate it for the awesome labor of love that it is. —Ryan Leach (rubberneckzine.com)

**SOMETHING FOR NOTHING #64**,

Free, 5½" x 8½", photocopied, 40 pgs. This is a music zine by a guy from Ohio who has figured out how to put together a really solid zine. It's a change-up on the usual punk zine format in that, instead of interviews, he picked out a couple of bands that he's into and wrote long, in-depth reviews of all the records that the band has put out. That obsession with not leaving anything out continues into a section where he reviews every record store he's been to (twelve pages worth!). The layout is really text heavy too, but I get the impression that he's trying to cram everything in without wasting space, so I can forgive the small font. Upon reading his reviews of theological books and Christian bands, I realized that he's a believer, which initially lowered my opinion of this zine. It doesn't make sense to me that someone can follow an organized religion and listen to anti-establishment punk rock at the same time, but then I don't make the rules on what beliefs punks should have. In fact, after pondering this for a while, I don't think people should worry too much about Christians "ruining" the punk scene. People have all kinds of opinions. It's a waste of time to judge which of them are punk or not. It is this guy's prerogative to write about whatever he wants in his zine, and I have to say that he is a pretty sharp writer. —Lauren Trout (516 Third St. NE, Massillon, OH 44646)

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**SPARE CHANGE #23**, \$3, 5½" x 8", photocopied, 40 pgs. To raise revenue for a failing USPS, the author of this zine sees it as his duty to mail out those annoying, ubiquitous business reply mail cards. While he's at it, he writes smart-ass comments where his address should go on the card and reprints them here. The results are short and hysterical, for instance, telling an aphrodisiac ad to "send more pictures of people fuckin'!" or asking Cemetery Space Pre-Purchase Program, "Wow, why would I want to pre-purchase cemetery space? I'm single with no dependents. When I die the taxpayers pick up the bill for my burial Ha, Ha, Ha..." These replies are staggered between unrelated haikus which are also quite humorous. For example, his haiku "My Attention Span": "people love to talk/jibber jabber and so on/some people listen" or take "The Larger Problem": "I am in control/which is quite scary because I am in control." The collaboration of true wit in the haiku with the feigned stupidity of the business replies makes for a hilarious, fun zine. I would recommend reading this in small bites—in order to stretch the laughs out—but I found it difficult to do so. —Craven Rock (Spare Change, PO Box 6023, Chattanooga, TN 37401)

**SUBURBAN BLIGHT #10**, \$1, 8½" x 5½", photocopied, 34 pgs. This zine came out in the height of the Occupy Wall Street movement and is a collection of columns and articles by NYC writers, artists, and organizers. There is a lot on Occupy Wall Street, but there is a lot on other political subjects, such as media portrayal of beauty, biometrics, and minimum wage. There is some art. There are a few music and movie reviews as well. The articles aren't too long but do a good job of getting their points across. The zine, in its entirety, has a lot of substance for its size. Worth a read if you run by it. —James Meier (Stephanie Basile, 30 E 29<sup>th</sup> St, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, NY, NY 10016)

**SUPPORT** Price varies, 8½" x 5½", 66 pgs. *Support* is a zine that covers sexual abuse. Its purpose is to help people become more understanding of sexual abuse—the trauma and pain it causes the victims. It is a collection of people sharing their experiences of being sexually abused. It gets graphic and the subject matter is very dark, which is why it is so important for people to be aware of it. This is one I think everyone should read because the subject matter is so serious. People shouldn't turn a blind eye

to it. —James Meier (Microcosm Publishing, PO Box 14332, Portland, OR 97293)

**TRUTH ABOUT FRACKING**, THE Free, 8½" x 5½", 4 pgs. This is a short one. I feel strongly about this issue. This pamphlet covers hydrofracking. Hydrofracking is a way of drilling for natural gasses that puts harmful chemicals in our water supplies and does tremendous harm. It has been a major problem in Pennsylvania, and it seems to keep growing and spreading. The pamphlet covers what hydrofracking is, how it pollutes the earth, and how to contact Pennsylvania senators to help stop fracking. Their website has loads more information and ways to get active. —James Meier (Protecting Our Waters, protectingourwaters.com)

**TOM TOM #6**, \$6, 8½" x 11", color printed, 55 pgs. *Tom Tom* is a magazine about female drummers that is filled with interesting articles covering all aspects of the subject. The magazine has events, gear reviews, up-and-coming drummers, tips and techniques, music reviews, and interviews; pretty much everything you could ask for. With all of the details covered, from professional-

looking graphic design to an oft-updated website, you can tell that the people working on this magazine aren't phoning anything in. Another thing that I love about *Tom Tom* is that they don't try to explain and defend their female-only focus; they just present their magazine to the world without apology. Take it or leave it. There's no cutesy shit to patronize the female readers, and there's no macho shit trying to appeal to guys as well. This magazine is brilliantly done and it covers a niche that I didn't even know that I was interested in. Absolutely recommended. —Lauren Trout (302 Bedford Ave., PMB #85, Brooklyn, NY, 11211, info@tomtommag.com)

**WHAT'S FOR DINNER? #4**, \$2, 8½" x 5½", 14 pgs. A short and sweet comic about a Stooges show, In-N-Out burgers, and vaginas. Right on. —Katie Dunne (no contact info)



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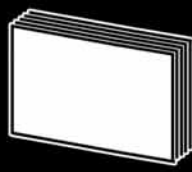
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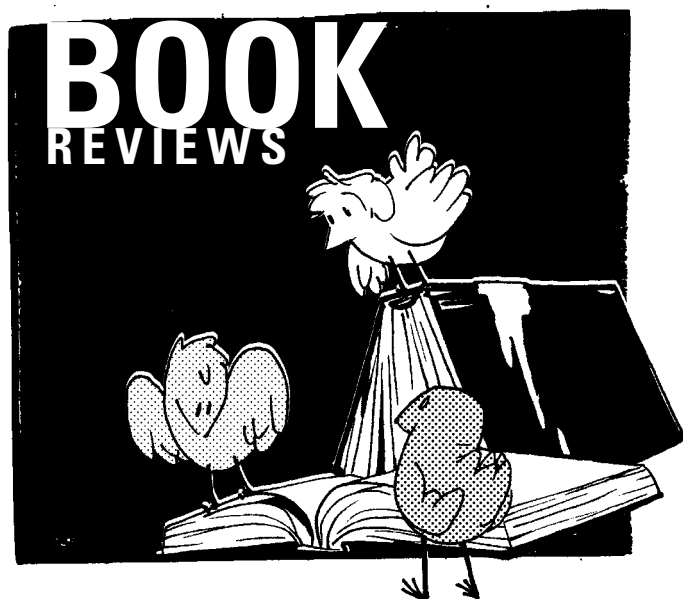
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### Barefoot and in the Kitchen

By Ashley Rowe

It's hard for me to express to people how much I love cashews, peanuts, and all things nutty. When I'm at a restaurant or grocery shopping, because of my enthusiasm, what invariably comes out of my mouth is, "I love nuts!" I usually just keep my mouth shut to withhold any sense of victory from lazy jokesters, but I will take this opportunity to enthuse unabashedly because in this book is a recipe for Mac and Cheese with a cashew sauce! So, I immediately bookmarked it, went to the store, and tried it out. It was delicious, like pretty much everything in this vegan cookbook, and I'm not a vegan. It includes several references in the front that define ingredients and methods that may be obscure to readers. This will prove to be a handy resource for anybody interested in new, interesting recipes. —Katie Dunne (Microcosm Publishing, 636 SE 11<sup>th</sup> Ave., Portland, OR 97214, microcosmpublishing.com)

### Building a Better Robot: 10 Years of the Mr. Roboto Project

Created by Andy Mulkerin, Mike Q. Roth, and Missy Wright with Dan Bidwa, and Arthur Daniel Allen

More and more punk is getting documented and collected into books than ever before. I've pretty much stopped buying any new book on the early U.K./NYC punk scenes, as those stories have been told and told and told some more. To the point, I think we all know it now. What I'm more interested in these days is the books that stray off the usual. It doesn't have to be old stuff, and, in the case of this book, it's somewhat recent. I'll let you know right now, time for me is mashed up and stirred around, so a decade seems like a year ago. Looking at this book, a lot of it seems like not that long ago, until I stop to consider what ever became of some of the bands featured within and the trends that cycled through.

The Mr. Roboto Project was a show space on the outskirts of Pittsburgh, PA. It was pretty much a storefront that held all-ages punk shows. A band I was in a few years back toured the East Coast with Total Fury. Mr. Roboto was the second stop on our tour. For some reason, the inside reminded me of a church more than a business, and I remember there was a basement underneath. The show went pretty well. My band was met with a tepid response, but the crowd went berserk for Total Fury. Caustic Christ were awesome and incredibly cool. All said and done, my experience there was positive. Seeing this book, I definitely get the sense of a community that formed around the space. Sprinkled among the photos are anecdotes on shows there and how the space came together. It does a great job of explaining what the DIY community was like at the time, and is still (somewhat) like.

The bulk of the book is photos of bands who played there, as well as individuals involved in some shape or form. The quality of photos vary from photographer to photographer, but you do get a lot of the crowd in most shots, which usually makes for an exciting shot. Check out the Warzone Womyn and The Endless Blockade photos for good examples. One I find interesting is of the singer from Gray Ghost—some of the crowd is behind him and none of them are looking in his direction at all.

A short list of bands featured in here are: Aphasia, Arab On Radar, Castle, Pink And Brown, The Locust, Engine Down, Brain Handle,

Suburban Death Machine, Kim Phuc, Annihilation Time, Hatred Surge, and more, many I have never heard of, and that's not a putdown. Furthermore, to illustrate the level of documentation that went on, at the back is a complete list of all the shows that have happened at the space. All of this comes with a DVD that has songs and video from Pittsburgh bands as well. More scenes need to document themselves! —M.Avr (The Roboto Project, therobotoproject.org/book)

### God, Forgive These Bastards (Stories from the Forgotten Life of Georgia Tech Pitcher Frank Turner)

By Rob Morton, 95 pgs.

To be honest, stories and legends of people like Frank Turner scare the shit out of me. I'm forty-four years old and finding that I have to start my life all over again. My wife has left me, I'm mired in student loan debt, and I don't have much of a future ahead. Also, like Frank Turner, I'm a baseball player, and I've been homeless for years at a time, from the time I was fifteen years old. I'm scared shitless that I'm going to end up like Frank Turner. Nevertheless, this isn't about me, this is a collection of stories, told by Frank Turner and retransmitted by the author. The stories are well-told, with bright, colorful language describing things that are dark, scary, sad, and, like the author states, the more unbelievable they are, the more they are grounded in truth. This is a powerful book and I highly recommend it. —Steve Hart (Cantankerous Titles, PO Box 14332, Portland, OR 97293)

### Mourning Remembrance:

#### A Collection of Mocking Obituaries Ripped from the Deadlines

By Jim Earl, 272 pgs.

This book is a series of fake obituaries for random notables, including Steve Jobs, Robert Moog, Aaron Spelling, and many other lesser-known figures. Each is only approximately a page or two long. It's my impression that this book is supposed to be humorous, but I'm not really getting it. The short passages were usually poking fun at the (made-up) way the person had died, often ironically, with relation to whatever it was they were known for. I occasionally chuckled at a few of these, but, for the most part, I didn't really get it. It's kind of weird, though, because Earl used to write for *The Daily Show* and won an Emmy for it, so one would expect there to be more humor here.

And it's not as though I have any problems with jokes about death. I find it to be a hilarious thing most of the time. But these obits just weren't funny. Who's to say why one person laughs at one thing and another person doesn't? Earl is definitely considered by some to be rather humorous—he has the track record to show that. But even with a foreword by Marc Maron and an afterward by Rachel Maddow, I didn't find there was enough humor in this book to make it worth my time. —Kurt Morris (Jim Earl, 1621 ½ Grafton St., LA, CA 90026)

### Persepolis 2

By Marjane Satrapi, \$12.95

I bought this because I loved the first book. This is the story of a girl from Iran who goes to school in Europe and her accounts of the differences between Western and Middle Eastern ideology. Marjane is grown up now, but going through some troubles while away in Europe. The second book is a chronicle of her emergence into adulthood, yet it is still a troublesome read for someone with Western ideals. I was on her side until she sold a fellow countryman out to save her own hide. Whether you agree with her views or not, this book is an important read from inside a world that is kept from our view. If nothing else can be taken from this book, it is that the family unit binds all cultures. —Gary Hornberger (pantheonbooks.com)

### White Elephants

By Katie Haegel, 127 pgs.

*White Elephants* read less like a book and more like a letter from a friend, a friend who knows all about the art of the rummage and the nuances of reviewing yard sales. White elephants are the personal treasures that one finds at garage sales and flea markets. Katie has an eye for the unique and unusual. Her use of language is adorable. She's a great story teller and her curiosity is engrossing. She picks up on tiny details about people, but she treats everyone gently in her descriptions and in sizing up their actions. It's truly a joyful read, but it's also tinged with sadness and grief, in the way happiness is in real life. Because when you relate to another person, they have history: an amalgamation of grief, nostalgia, pain, and also happiness. She touches on the death of her father and the strengthening of her relationship with her mother. This book will probably stay in my life for a long time, as I've inscribed it to my mom and given it to her as a gift. I know we'll have conversations in the future



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while planning our future outings, as we agree with Katie about yard sale etiquette. —Katie Dunne (Microcosm Publishing 636 SE 11<sup>th</sup> Ave., Portland, OR 97214, microcosmpublishing.com)

### Zinester's Guide to Portland (5th Edition)

Edited By Sean Granton, 129 pgs.

Upon first glance, this guide book seems promising. It had most of the information that I want to know when I'm first visiting a city: public transportation options, basic layout of the city, cheap restaurants, and grocery stores. There was one glaring omission though—a list of places to stay. No hotels, hostels, or even camping grounds mentioned here. I suppose you could just search for that on the internet. Wait, couldn't you just search for all of this on the internet? Why would you buy a guide book at all? Oh right, because you want to know what the "zinesters" do in Portland.

Craven Rock talked about this in his review of an earlier edition of this book, and I'm going to mention it too: this guide is tailored toward zinesters as envisioned by a particular set. In this guide, a person who is into zines would naturally be interested in vegan restaurants, comic shops,

bike shops, bars, and coffee houses. I think that actually defines "hipster" culture. We all know that hipsters hate being called hipsters, so it looks like they have decided to adopt the label "zinesters" instead. That is totally unfair, because people who write zines are a much more diverse group.

I don't get how the editors could decide what would or would not be relevant to zinesters. There's a section on skateboarding in the city, but no mention of wheelchair accessibility around the city. They highlight bars with two dollar pint specials, but don't list places that give discounts for seniors, teachers, or military. You see what I'm getting at here? I've read zines written by skaters and zines written by people who are disabled, so why would they cater to one group but not the other in this guide?

I've never been to Portland, so I can't really tell you if there is more to the city than what is in this guide book. But Craven Rock used to live there, and his review said it's best to just explore the city for yourself (or better—pick a different city to visit), so I would follow that advice instead.

—Lauren Trout (Microcosm)



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### Ear Goggles #6: DVD

This is a badass DVD zine featuring live performances from twenty-six punk bands in Canada, along with some other odds and ends. I am blown away by how much time and effort it must have taken to go to all these shows, get great footage, and then edit it all together into a DVD with familiar zine qualities. Most of the bands here fit somewhere into the thrash/hardcore/metal categories. I was really into Congress, Ken Mode, Hightower, OFF!, and of course, Fucked Up. The band Rebel Spell sounds great in their live clip, but elsewhere on the DVD they have a music video that just sounds flat in comparison. Other than that, there's a bunch of metal bands that were way too heavy for me and a few punk bands that didn't really draw me in. The bands that I wasn't into, but some would consider noteworthy include: The Vibrators, Jello Biafra And The GTMO School Of Medicine, Buried Inside, The Banned, The Real McKenzies, and Toxic Holocaust. Also in the DVD are a short film, a skate video of Andy Anderson, and fun, low-budget advertisements from local businesses. Sadly, this edition is now out of print. But it looks like the guys who run this project put out new DVDs pretty regularly and they only cost five dollars, so I'll be keeping an eye out for the next one. —Lauren Trout ([eargogglesdvd.com](http://eargogglesdvd.com))

### An Ecology of Mind: A Daughter's Portrait of Gregory Bateson: DVD

It's both amusing and depressing that Gregory Bateson, at this juncture in time, is less well known on Planet Earth than almost all reality TV "celebrities" and possibly even the heavyset British girl currently getting her fifteen minutes of fame due to a Youtube video wherein she sobs inconsolably over the breakup of some teen-vampire movie stars she's probably never met. That's pretty solid evidence that Camus wasn't totally out of his tree when he asserted that life is absurd.

That those who truly offer so little so easily eclipse a person who truly offers so much is simply a big, fat, sobbing perversion of justice.

Bateson was someone who wore a staggering number of hats; he was an anthropologist, psychologist, cyberneticist, environmentalist, ethnologist, epistemologist, systems thinker, linguist, semiotician... just to name a few. In short, he was a world-class generalist—what Grace Llewellyn would call a "glorious generalist"—with a list of interdisciplinary credentials to make the pinkish dumpling in your head twitch. In fact, his work, along with his colleagues at the Macy Conferences in the 1940s, figured enormously in the development of cybernetics, which in turn laid the groundwork for the development of AI Gore's much beloved Internet, which of course, brings things like chubby, sobbing British girls into our lives.

Bateson's fame probably peaked in the late '60s and throughout the '70s when he was a favorite and frequent lecturer at the Esalen Institute at Big Sur. But like so many of the star attractions of those halcyon days of Esalen—John Lilly, Fritz Perls, among others—Bateson and his wide-ranging work seemed to begin to fade from public view as the '70s drew to a close. Unfortunately, he's now largely unknown outside of certain academic and intellectual circles. This could be due to a great extent to Bateson's reputation of being "inscrutable" and "abstruse."

Hopefully daughter Nora Bateson's documentary *An Ecology of Mind* will change all that.

This film, more than a dry, by-the-numbers recounting of Bateson's sundry activities and achievements over his seventy-six years of existence, is more of a meditation on his many ideas about how humans think and how their perspectives influence the way they choose to interact with their surroundings. Thoughtfully narrated by Nora Bateson and utilizing archival lecture footage of Gregory Bateson himself, the film deftly moves you into new perspectives where previously unnoticed relationships, systems within systems, begin to come into focus.

A major thematic aspect of *An Ecology of Mind* is frames and framing; specifically, the way the mind frames reality into graspable units or parcels—and throughout the film, scenes are composed so as to show various physical frames, like frames around a painting, surrounding and encapsulating the footage. It proves to be a subtle but effective way to get a valuable point across on a visual level.

That point, which Bateson was so elegantly directing your attention to, is to not only try to be aware of this "framing" mechanism but to deeply realize that those very frames—those lines of division giving apparent "separation" to certain things from certain other things—no matter how seductive and persuasive, are nothing more than projections of the mind. This framing phenomenon is *partial* in multiple senses of the word: it is incomplete, it is constituent, and it is biased. Reality—to use a clumsy, almost barbaric, but seemingly inescapable word—is simply not cut up into those nicely digestible chunks you think you encounter as you wend your way through life.

But the concept of framing is itself nothing more than yet another way of "chopping" existence up into comprehensible segments and the whole thing is therefore, no matter how you cut it, a procrustean affair. The key

is, as Nora Bateson states early in the film, “to be sure you don’t get stuck down a singular line of thinking.”

And that tips Bateson’s hand: that of all the systems, modalities, paradigms, and approaches he utilized throughout his career, epistemology was probably the skeleton key that unlocked all the doors. It all came down, simply, to the way one looks at the way one looks at and understands that which “enters” his/her realm of experience. (Yes, I’m framing a lot of words in this review with quotation marks, which almost everyone finds annoying, but from a Batesonian point of view—a view heavily influenced by the General Semantics of Alfred Korzybski—it adds some clarity, at the possible cost of being somewhat irksome.)

What I find interesting is that Bateson arrived at a vision strikingly similar to that of the *sophia perennis*—aka: the Perennial Philosophy—strictly by way of science and philosophy, and not by the more typical routes of mysticism or religion (though Bateson stressed that “philosophy is not my business.”).

And while that news might be consternating enough to cause many mystics to eat their own turbans, it also indicates that the alleged “divide” between the material and spiritual realms is a hoax perpetrated on humanity by none other than their own nervous systems. Equally spurious, as this film points out, is the imagined separation between “human beings” and “the world of nature.” This is a point that is sometimes seemingly, and surprisingly, lost on many people who swaddle themselves in prideful notions of their own greenishness and are forever locked in righteous battle with the yahoos of the “You Can’t Hurt the Earth” baboon militia.

What’s become known—almost disparagingly, thanks to the ever-spewing Right Wing Propaganda machine—as the “environmental movement,” has splintered off into a dizzying array of factions: Arne Naess’s Deep Ecology camp, Timothy Morton’s Dark Ecology followers, Paul Virilio’s Grey Ecologists, Ed Abbey-style monkey wrenchers, Sierra Clubbers, Earth Firsters, Rewilders, and the seemingly innumerable movements associated with people like Derrick Jensen, Thomas Berry, David Suzuki, etc.

All of these various “green” factions have their respective concepts, philosophies, histories, values, worldview, ethics, and so on. In other words, they all have their pet “abstractions.” But few of them have any

kind of recursive epistemology. And as Bateson once wrote, “If we have wrong ideas of how our abstractions are built—if, in a word, we have poor epistemological habits—we shall be in trouble—and we are.”

Bateson, no doubt, was a person of towering intellect and deep wisdom, so much so that he struck some as intimidating—especially when he was casually juggling dangerously weighty terms like “schismogenesis” and “deuterolearning.” And he was aware of the fact that his ideas weren’t always connecting with people the way he would’ve liked. In fact, he’s quoted as having lamented that “very few people have any idea what I’m talking about.” Thanks to Nora Bateson, that shaky connection might be in the process of finally being fixed. *An Ecology of Mind* is a very wise, thoughtful, thought-provoking film that renders many of Bateson’s core ideas accessible to just about anyone, possibly even reality TV stars. And it seems likely now that it will no longer be a case of “very few” people having any idea of what Gregory Bateson was talking about. Highly recommended. —Aphid Peewit (bullfrogfilms.com)

#### Jack Clutton’s Guided Tour: DVD

Bath is an ancient town in southwest England, home to Roman baths, abbeys, and is also home to the classic political band Citizen Fish. *Jack Clutton’s Guided Tour* is a collection of ninety minutes of band gigs and political activities all loosely based around the city of Bath. Featuring footage shot primarily by Culture Shock/Citizen Fish/Rhythmites member Jasper, the live footage spans a nearly thirty year period and includes bands like Subhumans, Citizen Fish, A-Heads, Witch Hunt, Chumbawamba, Leftover Crack, Star Fucking Hipsters, Heated Rollers, Embrace The Kill, and Rhythmites. Accompanying all of this footage is a Cook’s tour of Bath by your host Jack Clutton and shots of various political groups and actions that have taken place in Bath over the past thirty years. There are some great shows included on the DVD, particularly the early ‘80s Subhumans shows, the acapella Chumbawamba performance, and the single song by Star Fucking Hipsters. An additional add-on for the Anglophile is the actual Bath scenery and the blatant English charm of the entire release. This is a nice collection of one man’s filming of people, bands, and politico actions spanning three decades and will certainly keep you interested through out the entire DVD. —Mark Twistworthy (Crash, PO Box 717, Oregon City, OR 97045)



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